









# Historical Backgrounds of the Great War

THE WAR: ITS ORIGINS  
AND WARNINGS

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## PREFACE

THIS book originated in a series of lectures arranged for the Sheffield University War Lectures Committee, and for various Relief Committees, Adult Schools, Ethical Societies, and similar organizations in the Sheffield area. Since they were given, however, they have grown so considerably that I have thought it better to call them in their present form essays rather than lectures, for fear lest any reader should imagine that I actually administered such masses to my various audiences in lecture form. Nevertheless, an occasional colloquialism or repetition in the text which I may have not removed may serve to indicate the original form of the four essays which constitute the book.

In writing these pages I have aimed rather at provoking thought than at imparting exact information; and if a critical reader undertakes to check my statements he will doubtless find the book afford him much valuable exercise. Nevertheless, I hope that my effort will have achieved its object, which is to rouse sufficient interest to make readers of it think, and inquire for themselves about the war and its

effects. Thought based upon historical fact is the best cure for our national vice of muddling through.

The differences in point of view which exist among the combatants, though less tangible to deal with than the historic facts which have led to the war, are nevertheless too important to be ignored; and in endeavouring to sketch them I have drawn as far as I have been able on my personal experiences in travel in the lands of all the combatants except the Balkan States and Japan.

Since these essays were written the Board of Education has issued its Circular 869 on the Teaching of Modern European History, and I was comforted, on reading it, to find that I had already anticipated in detail its suggestions in the historical framework of my book. I therefore venture to hope that the essays I have written will prove useful to such of my fellow-teachers of history as adopt the Board's suggestion "to arrange for special lectures or courses of reading suitable even for the younger pupils, dealing with the causes and progress of the present war." The Board itself admits that "there is not available so good a supply of suitable books—either books suitable as textbooks for pupils or books of reference for use of the masters and to be included in the school library—for the latter as there is for the earlier period," i.e. from 1871 onwards. I hope accordingly that my essays may help to fill the void. That they follow the lines of the Circular the following extract from the Circular will, I think, make clear

to those who read the various essays. "It will be possible to point out how the remote past still lives in the present : as, for instance, in the existence of a debatable territory between France and Germany which is ultimately due to the division of the Empire of Charles the Great ; the reasons why the Low Countries have so often been the seat of war between the greater Powers, and the continuity of English policy with regard to the independence of this district of Europe from the time of Edward I ; the reasons for the late organization of Italy and Germany as National States ; the fall of Poland ; the rise of Russia ; and the historical position of the Austrian Monarchy, especially in connection with the Mohammedan conquests and the gradual recovery of territory from the Turks." It may be too much to say, in the words of the Circular, "matters such as these naturally arise in the course of any well-directed study of English history," but I certainly claim that they form the backbone of my essays—and particularly of the first, on Germany, and the fourth, on England and Sea Power.

F. J. A.

SHEFFIELD,

*November 1914.*





## CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE . . . . . 5

INTRODUCTION . . . . . 13

### FIRST ESSAY

GERMANY: ITS GROWTH, CHARACTER, AND CULTURE . 27

### SECOND ESSAY

FRANCE: THE PIONEER OF CIVILIZATION . . . 105

### THIRD ESSAY

THE SLAVS AND THEIR PROBLEMS . . . 145

### FOURTH ESSAY

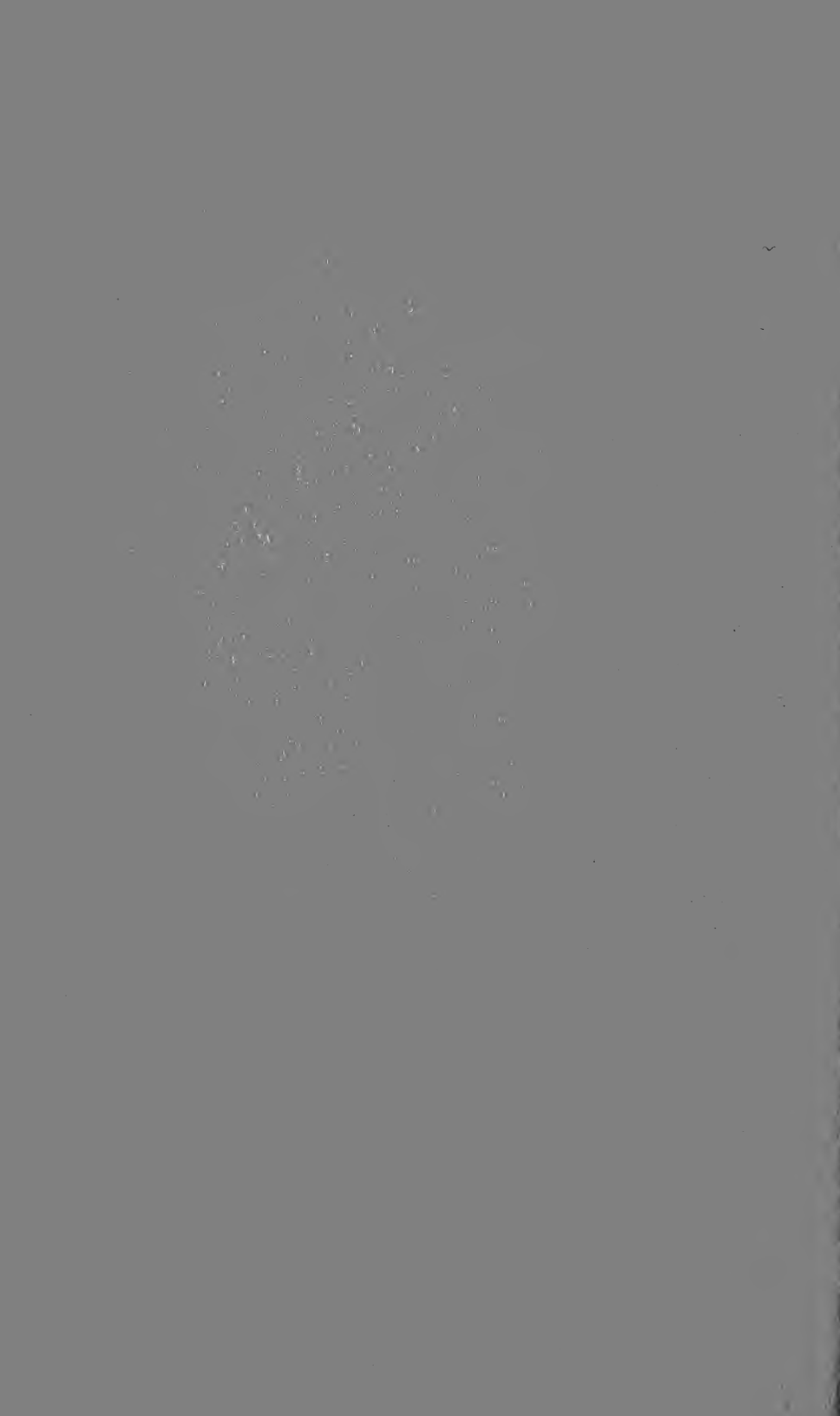
ENGLAND AND SEA POWER . . . 187



## ENGLAND

ARISE up, England, from the smoky cloud  
That covers thee, the din of whirling wheels :  
Not the pale spinner, prematurely bowed  
By his hot toil, alone the influence feels  
Of all this deep necessity for gain—  
Gain still : but deem not only by the strain  
Of engines on the sea and on the shore,  
Glory, that was thy birthright to retain.  
O thou that knowest not a conqueror,  
Unchecked desires have multiplied in thee,  
Till with their bat wings they shut out the sun :  
So in the dusk thou goest moodily,  
With a bent head, as one who gropes for ore,  
Heedless of living streams that round him run.

LORD HANMER.



## INTRODUCTION

NEVER has England experienced so sudden and so tremendous a change as that which came over her in the summer of 1914. The schools broke up and families went off to the seaside in the fine weather at the end of July. By the August Bank Holiday the State had hold of the railways, all excursions were cancelled, a food panic and a money panic with a Bank rate of 10 per cent. had swept over the land, flustering though not really shaking our nerves, and in short everybody was brought up suddenly by the fact that the State—the Government whom in happier days we had delighted to abuse—was possessed of powers over us and our belongings about which we had quite forgotten, if indeed we had ever known.

Our party politics vanished in a night; the Opposition became His Majesty's Opposition indeed; organizations both masculine and feminine which had adopted violence for the advancement of their respective causes found themselves suddenly changed, as if by some magic agency, into armed defenders of their common country and resourceful ministrants to those who were suffering or about to suffer; and soldiering leaped at once from being an amiable weakness of one's neighbour in the Territorials to becoming the supreme test of one's manhood.

Meanwhile a whole series of experiments which a month earlier would have caused interminable talk

were established by the machinery which some people had already looked upon as no longer capable of effective action—namely Parliament—in a few minutes each. Not only did the State take over the railways—so that one could travel on the North Western with a Great Central ticket—but it started a scheme of Shipping Insurance ; it re-established a Press Censorship which had lapsed more than a couple of centuries before ; it told people that for the time being they need not pay their debts if they were of certain kinds ; it turned postal orders into currency ; it issued Treasury notes in shoals ; and—incredible though it may seem—it actually fixed the prices of foodstuffs : thus incidentally revealing the smart business man who waits for a rise in price as a public enemy and a pest, if not an actual traitor—even the Sheffield cutlers and gun-makers reflected for a moment on the real significance of their work and wondered as to its destination. And yet, in spite of the magnitude of these measures, in spite of their drastic and far-reaching effect, their enactment raised hardly a murmur and certainly no opposition. There were no cries that the State was going beyond its proper bounds ; there were no complaints of Socialism rearing its head in our midst (indeed, the President of the Anti-Socialist League was among the first, I believe, to urge the State to do more than it proposed to do for those who were dependent on our soldiers). No : we looked on Parliament less as the guardian of our liberties than as the rapid registrar of expert decrees ; we took these breathless revolutions in our accustomed experience as a matter of course ; and in so doing we realized, many of us for the first time, the true nature of the State's powers and therefore also of the liberty we had hitherto enjoyed—namely, that it was, as it were, merely what is left over : the residuum of independence which the State could afford with safety to leave

with us under the existing circumstances. It was suddenly borne in upon us that the individual has no rights as against the State, since apart from the State's protection he would have nothing of his own—not even his liberty.

But we were all too excited or anxious to reflect and philosophize in this way. Only at a later date shall we have the leisure and inclination to return in memory to those close-packed days and try to extract from them the lessons they contain—unless we are too inflated with self-righteousness after the war to learn anything at all from it. Those days were indeed full of matter for thought—a veritable quarry for the student of social and political questions; and I hope that ultimately we shall be able to make use of all the experience we have been gaining so rapidly since August 1914, before the memory of these critical weeks has slipped—like the golden sand with which our children were playing at the time—through our fingers.

Now what was it that had caused all this disturbance and spoilt our holidays? Of course, it was the war. The war had swept our interests rudely aside, it had pulled the whole of our public life into a fresh perspective; it had made us hesitate about our favourite amusements—even football trembled just as it was about to re-ascend its throne—it had drawn our young men into the Army and threatened a dislocation in our industries which dwarfed the effect of the biggest strikes of recent years; it had also—*per contra*—brought suddenly to an end all industrial disputes. And yet, although we accepted all this without a murmur, how many of us knew what it was all about?

We pride ourselves on being a self-governing people; yet the whole course of our Government has been deflected, our most-discussed measures shelved, the whole of the machinery by which we

imagine that we direct our own affairs arrested and turned to unaccustomed uses—simply because an Austrian archduke had been killed in a Balkan town.

Now, troubles of one sort or another in the Balkans are by no means new. Indeed, we had grown quite accustomed to them—so accustomed, in fact, that many of us doubtless were in the habit of saying when we saw in our morning's paper that fighting was renewed in that unhappy peninsula: "They're at it again, I see," and then of turning to discover where our favourite football team was in the League or what was the price of our favourite investment.

On this last occasion, however, the matter seemed different: it seemed more obstinate, less inclined to resolve itself; and then suddenly, gaining momentum with tremendous rapidity, it crashed upon us as the awful avalanche of a European war: the great war that had been hanging over us for decades, the war that some of us had almost ceased to believe in, since it had been so often threatened, yet so often averted, and above all since it was so terrible to think about.

Fortunately, thanks to the Boer War and its bitter lessons, our fighting forces, though small, were well prepared; but if as regards military readiness we were not, within our limits, found wanting, nevertheless on the intellectual side our unpreparedness was appalling. As one talked to people about the war, or caught fragments of what they were saying to each other, one found that practically nobody had an adequate idea of what it was all about. After the first shock of astonishment had passed, the general feeling seemed to be one of resentment that so little a State as Servia could set all Europe by the ears. Later, it is true, the question of Belgian neutrality arose like a rock in the ocean to which we could cling; but even with this basis of reason for the war—as far as we English were concerned—



there still seemed to be a lurking idea in men's minds that there must be some larger explanation of the war as a whole than had hitherto become apparent to them. The rock of Belgian neutrality upon which our peace had been shipwrecked was, in short, felt to be but the projecting summit of a vast mass, the sides of which sloped down to depths unknown to the man in the street. For the first time, perhaps, in his experience he realized that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamed of in his philosophy and he was seized with a sudden desire to know. The domestic questions about which he had been so excited but a few short weeks before had suddenly been eclipsed by foreign questions about which he knew nothing and, as a rule, cared less ; and suddenly he realized that the relative importance of these two sets of questions had been reversed, that he was not master in his own house because he knew too little of the forces at work outside his house to gauge, still less to direct, them. As a self-governing Englishman, if not as "a good European," it behoved him then to get to know as soon as might be what he could about this alien question which was so rudely upsetting his island menage. And so he began to demand enlightenment—and enlightenment at express speed and with a minimum of the thinking which hurts him so and which he regards, with Hamlet, as a malady. Unfortunately, however, the information he was seeking was not easily peptonized or even done up in pilulæ, for it was nothing less than the history of Europe for several centuries past, and any attempt to bolt that dish is nearly certain to lead to a mental indigestion which will lower, not increase, his fighting strength.

His immediate needs can be supplied only in part ; but let us hope that now he has realized the necessity for an adequate teaching of history he will see to

it that this most vital of all subjects is taught henceforth in such a way as to make it a real source of strength and guidance to the democracy in their task of ruling both themselves and the Empire. The "right little, tight little island," Alfred-and-the-cakes conception of the subject, so favoured by the comfortably padded arm-chair historians who rule our University Local Examinations, will have to go and a more vital, more universal, treatment of the subject must take its place. In France, I believe, they begin with general history in simple sweeping outline and gradually focus on their own. In England we begin by isolating our own history so completely that it becomes almost meaningless, and then make matters worse by never going beyond the limits of our national history textbooks. The ratio as between home and foreign affairs must be redetermined. History *per se* and apart from our own island story must be taught in future, and the subject made dynamic by the acknowledgment of those great forces of race and economy and religion which mould the destinies of men just as rainfall and latitude determine the vegetation of any given area of the earth's surface. Like the Army, history is neglected and ignored in time of peace, and then suddenly rediscovered and abused for being inadequate in time of war. Were it not for the experts in both fields, who work unrecognized for years, the nation would have to pay a heavy price indeed for its neglect of these connected factors in national life.

But teaching alone, however excellent, will never give the Englishman that sense of other presences which land frontiers and their corollary—conscription—gives to every foreigner. The silver streak to which we owe so much is accountable also, of course, for our insularity: not only is Great Britain an island, but every Briton who lives in it is an island as well—self-contained and difficult to approach; and

in this double insularity lurks the danger we are now facing—the danger of a faulty and imperfect realization of the temper and spirit of foreign peoples, of their ideals and aims, of a lack of interest in foreign affairs and foreign movements generally—the danger of the sea change, in short. And, to my mind, there is but one effective escape from that danger, and that is, foreign travel sensibly undertaken. A friend and I went from Sheffield through London and Dover to Belgium. We visited Ostend, Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, Liège, Dinant, and Namur; we crossed the border and reached Aachen, or Aix-la-Chapelle—the run into Germany cost us sixpence each—and the whole tour of a week's duration cost us less than five pounds each, right back to Sheffield again. With this record before him and these figures—and we did it quite comfortably; I understand that we spent more than ten shillings each in tips—let no comfortably placed clerk or artizan say that a foreign tour is beyond his reach; while as to the language, an Englishman gets along somehow under all conditions; and a traveller never can know the language of every land he happens to be in—sooner or later he is bound to be reduced to speechlessness. We may, then, hope for great results from improved teaching and increased travel (every teacher should be made to travel as part of his training); but for the moment our ignorance is a serious handicap, how serious appears with clearness only when we remember the effect of our hesitation after Germany had declared war on France and Russia. For some days before that declaration there had been a strong movement all over England in favour of neutrality. That movement collapsed suddenly, it is true, as soon as the Germans crossed the Belgian frontier; but the existence of the spirit which animated that movement was the chief factor in Germany's decision. Germany declared war because

our neutrality was virtually assured—to German eyes. How great therefore was German surprise and anger at the sudden reversal of our national attitude ! Can we wonder that the Germans thought it was deliberate on our part, that, like some of the German troops who throw up their hands and so lure our men to their death, we had feigned neutrality just to induce the Germans to declare war and then turned treacherously upon them and joined our Navy to the gigantic forces of France and Russia? We did nothing of the kind—our hesitation was genuine, not feigned, as the Germans, anxious to blame us for their misjudgment, believe ; it was the hesitation of ignorance, not of design. Yet its effects were the same ; and it is at least arguable that our national hesitation, born as it was of our national ignorance of the matters at issue and of our own past foreign policy, was the real cause of the war. If it be suggested that, since the war was bound to come sooner or later, the sooner the better and the greater the forces opposed to Germany the greater the chance of ultimate peace, I am bound to say that such a line of argument is Machiavellian and of a sort we should expect from Germany rather than from ourselves. If good comes out of the evil results of our ignorance we can claim no credit for it. Drift is always dangerous and undignified, and especially so when it is due to ignorance. Quite a modest amount of knowledge of German history and ideas would have convinced Englishmen of all that lay behind the Kaiser's words and deeds. Nobody who knew anything of the Napoleonic struggle of the previous century could have doubted England's part in the war which burst so suddenly over Europe practically on the centenary of Napoleon's defeat at the hands of Wellington—and Blücher ; while the connection between England and Belgium is so ancient and of such a nature that our intervention can be described,

as all students of history will acknowledge, only in the words of Mr. Bonar Law—words endorsed by Mr. Balfour—at the great Guildhall meeting in August 1914, when he said that in the matter of Belgium England's honour and England's interest went together. These were the most honest words on the intervention of England in the land-fighting that I have yet heard from a public man; they convey the teaching of history, and we need not be ashamed to confess that our interest as much as our honour is involved in our action. As I heard Professor Vinogradoff say lately, "Infatuation and insincerity are bound to bring retribution."

My next reason for believing that an increase in our knowledge would be an element of strength in our great national effort is this: a short war may be fought and won in a burst of sheer enthusiasm; but for a long war other qualities are required. The determination that will persevere to the end of a long and dragging war, with its cruel and inevitable losses, is the determination which arises out of the conviction that nothing but stern necessity and the consequences of failure determine our action; you beat your enemy by studying him and understanding him, as any boxer will tell you. "It's dogged that does it" in a long war; and doggedness, if it is not founded on mere stupidity, must be founded on a clear vision of the end in view. There seems to me something prophetic in the popularity of "It's a long way to Tipperary" among our men; and I imagine that the last marches are likely to be made in silence. Do we realize yet the significance of the single fact, for instance, that the women of South Germany have forced reluctant officials to accept their golden ornaments? "Gold is always wanted in war-time," they say; and they would feel ashamed to flaunt it in time of national extremity for mere ostentation.

Of all the lines in our patriotic minstrelsy the one we shall need most in the long run will not be "Britons never shall be slaves," but a line from another nautical song, "Hearts of Oak," and that line is, "Steady, boys, steady!" and, to me at any rate, the steadiness, the ballast we need to keep us on an even keel amidst the gales and billows of this tempest of war, is as much history as we can intelligently take on board. Hence my reasons for the mainly historical line I shall take in this series of essays. The thrills we get from the detailed fighting, the heroism of our soldiers and sailors, are, after all, only the last moves in the long game of chess that has been played for years previous between the various Chancelleries of Europe. Just as artillery and rifle fire itself only prepares the way for the bayonet charge, so do diplomatic notes and telegrams in their turn prepare the way for the artillery. All focuses on the bayonet; but behind the soldier is the diplomatist.

Another reason for spreading knowledge in time of war—especially historical knowledge—is its hardening effect, its killing out of the sentimentality in which we usually soak ourselves. We are so unused to the horrors of war that they make us sick; we try to escape the very thought of them. But nausea has to be overcome, for it is akin to panic. The young surgeon cannot afford to have his nerve shaken by the blood and the reek when he is in the middle of his first operation; and so must it be with us who are an unblooded generation. The English fox-hunter wipes the bleeding stump of the fox's tail across the face of the boy or girl he has taken to hounds for the first time; and thus they are "blooded." Now some such bleeding seems to be a national necessity for us, and history provides it, as, for instance, in the details of Agincourt. Nelson was always seasick for the first few days of a voyage;

but he had overcome his weakness by the day of battle. As with Nelson, so with his fellow-countrymen. Given time, they recover ; but there is always an anxious period of readjustment which a people with a better mental preparation for war escapes. We find it harder than they to face the harsh necessities for war : to think, for instance, of a bayonet being used for killing men during the daytime and for toasting a steak cut from a horse killed in action after the fight is over ! We shrink from the dilemma produced by the use of non-combatants as a shield for the enemy's advance, even though the women so used call on the Allied troops to shoot ; we do not rise at once to the height of the old Scotch couplet :—

He who fights and runs away  
Lives to fight another day,

when the fate of cruisers is in the balance ; and the Admiralty has had to remind its captains of the principle contained in Stevenson's pirate song, "Time for us to go," even when a consort is sinking. We are apt to think seriousness and a sense of responsibility, especially in the young, a sign of priggishness, and are unable to realize that Nelson's midshipmen at the age of thirteen or so could not only bring a prize across the Atlantic and beat off Spanish attacks on her, but could also write home in this strain on the death of Nelson : "But, Britons, still be joyful. Cease to weep. Do not give way to unmanly pleasures. I do not mean to say, Care not for his death, but regret it in a manly manner." We like our boys to be boyish and believe—quite rightly—in slow development ; but we are also apt to forget that development may be so slow as to be inappreciable ; and we have too many adults among us who are merely old boys and not men at



all in any real sense—people who make the mock-virtue of mock-modesty an excuse for shirking responsibility ; people whose chief aim is to be lost in the crowd and exactly like everybody else ; people who solace themselves with the dangerous half-truth that they will learn to command merely by learning to obey. We are, in short, apt to be soft in the first stages of war, and it is largely by envisaging the facts which history reveals that we grow hardened to its horrors ; and can at last accept the great words of Cromwell when he said : “ Being denied just things, we thought it our duty to get that by the sword which was not to be got otherwise—and this hath ever been the spirit of Englishmen.”

Let us now try to imagine ourselves at the point when victory has been achieved, peace signed, and normal life resumed. With a sigh of relief the Englishman will relapse into his earlier rut ; he will forget all about the war as speedily as ever he can ; he will shut out from his mind and memory the picture of a ravaged continent ; the details and actualities he was forced to face during the war will soon become faint and blurred ; he will forget the geography the war has taught him ; he will gratefully look on life once more from his cosy little island standpoint, and thank Heaven it is no longer necessary to pretend to understand the French or the Russians, Bernhardt, Nietzsche, or Treitschke. He can sweep all such harsh names, all such nebulous ideas from his mind at the same time that he finally abandons the attempt to pronounce the names of Polish fortresses ; and he can once more revel with a good conscience in the blessings of peace, which mean to him a resumption of the daily service along the well-worn tram-lines of his accustomed life with nothing in particular to think about. Happy in his escape from the unaccustomed regions into which the war has led him, he soon



sinks—if he is true to his own past—into the dangerous state in which earlier realities have ceased to be real, earlier dangers have become merely the bogies of the alarmist or else of the professional man with an axe to grind, earlier precautions simply the wasteful extravagance of a more barbarous and brutal age. Intent once more on his business—the true end of man—he will tend only too quickly to forget all that the war has taught him ; and if such be the case even with the generation which lived through the actual period of the fighting, how much more will it be true of the next and succeeding generations ! How, then, are we to protect posterity from this gradual descent into unreality, which is the greatest peril of our insular position—a peril from which continental peoples are preserved by the continual presence of armed forces across their frontiers ? Surely, by a real study of our past wars and the effects of them. Even the far-distant story of Ethelred the Unready, of the decay of the Navy, of the massacre of the Danes in 1002—an Anglo-Saxon alternative to our present-day spy-removing—the subsequent conquest of England by the Danes, have a direct message to us to-day. Ignorant contempt, again, for the Normans was largely responsible for the Conquest of 1066 ; and so we could go on. Each conquest, each shock, produces a more or less transitory change in England, by breaking into the charmed circle in which she lives and reminding her of the existence of the foreigner. We remember for a moment that national existence may be a struggle even for us ; and then we forget. But unless we learn to remember, unless we open our minds to the invasion of facts and ideas from our own past and from abroad, we may even yet have, once again, some day, unwillingly to open our land to the invader in arms.

Lastly, when this war is brought to a close

the question of settlement will arise, and the settlement reached will represent the equilibrium, not only of the forces at present contending against each other, but also of the different factors on the winning side. The terms of the victors, that is to say, will represent the views that the victors hold. Now I do not expect any great diversity among these views ; indeed, it is quite clear there will be considerable agreement. Nevertheless it will be well for the voice of Britain to be as strong and as clear as possible in the enunciation of her views, and if our voice is to be strong and clear our thinking must be strong and clear before we can express ourselves. Now we cannot possibly think out effectively what sort of a settlement we wish our Ministers to insist upon unless we are acquainted with the main facts at least of the European position. Our weight in the counsels of the Allies depends, that is to say, not only on the size of our Expeditionary Force and the strength of our Navy, but also on the clearness and vigour of our views. Therefore hard thinking based on knowledge of the historical facts is as real an element of strength to us as are howitzers and machine-guns. A patient study of the roots of the war will in the fullness of time enable us to gather the ripe fruits of the war.

# THE WAR: ITS ORIGINS AND WARNINGS

## FIRST ESSAY

### *GERMANY: ITS GROWTH, CHARACTER, AND CULTURE*

#### I

#### GROWTH

A RADICAL is a man who professes to get to the roots of things ; he claims that action can be effective only when it is based upon thorough knowledge ; and, whether we call ourselves Radicals or not, we must all acknowledge that, in the matter of this war at least, an effective understanding, so necessary to effective action—and effective settlement at the end—is to be obtained only by getting back to the beginning—to the root of the whole matter.

Let us plunge, then, boldly into the past : let us press back in thought till we come to a satisfactory starting-point. If we do so, where shall we find it? At nothing more recent than the year 410 A.D. And why there? Because it was in that year that Rome fell—or rather silted up—and the Dark Ages began to cloud over Europe, and enfolded it for the

next four centuries. Let us say rather, Western Europe, since the Eastern section of the old Roman Empire, the Balkan Peninsula, with its capital, Constantinople, did not fall. Indeed, the great city on the Bosphorus remained "the Bulwark of the West" in even a truer sense than Venice for over a thousand years—till 1453 indeed; and her fall in that year before the Turks, so far from being followed by a darkening and dimming of civilization such as had followed the decay of Rome a thousand years earlier, set the torch to that great flame we call the Renaissance.

Here, then, we have two centres: Rome falling in 410; Constantinople resisting till 1453; and we have the Dark Ages hiding everything from view in the West for a matter of four hundred years from 410. Yet not quite everything. There are at least two movements we ought to mention. The Kaiser told his troops going to China to emulate the deeds of the Huns under Attila. Now Attila and the Huns belong to these very Dark Ages we are thinking about. Attila called himself *Flagellum Dei* ("the Scourge of God"); he led his followers in about the year 450 from the south of Russia—they say their god showed them the ford over the Don by taking the form of a stag they were hunting—across Europe till he nearly reached the North Sea. His soldiers struck terror into the peoples they encountered. Contemporaries describe them as dwarfish warriors of Eastern type whose legs were bowed with constant sitting on horseback. They were mere destroyers, and having been defeated at Châlons (so near the centre of much of the fighting of the present war), their menace faded, and they became but a memory in Europe. Yet two races we shall have to refer to later have apparently some kinship with these nomadic marauders of the Dark Ages, and these are the partners of the Austrians in the Dual

Monarchy, the Hungarians and the Finns, a people once subject to Sweden, now subject to Russia, who, in their land immediately to the east of St. Petersburg—I should have said Petrograd—have developed very considerably. They even have lady Members of Parliament !

The other people we must mention in these four centuries are much more important to our story. So far from fading away as the Huns did, they remain a permanent factor in world history. About the year 600 A.D. Mohammed arose and set in motion for the spread of his warlike faith all the energy and enthusiasm of the most energetic people in the world, the Arabs. His teachings were simple. They remind us of the Old Testament ; they inculcate the same belief in One God who actively leads His chosen people by Vicegerents or Judges into a promised land and breaks the heathen to their service. Mohammed's marching orders to his religious fanatics are simple. They are to take no wine, and if possible they are to get killed in battle—for death in the cause of their faith assures their entry into heaven. To-day this desire for a fighting martyr's death is as strong as ever, and even the constant wars in which the Mohammedans are engaged do not provide all the opportunities devout Mussulmans require, so once a year, in a bloodstained procession through the streets of Stamboul, they cut themselves with knives like the priests of Baal in the days of Elijah and hope to die from their wounds.

The fighting force of these fanatics is a momentous factor in world politics, as we shall see presently. We rely on it very largely in India ; we felt its force in the Khyber, and again in Egypt and the Soudan. At Omdurman, for instance, where Kitchener was in command, the Khalifa's men came on and on till the last was shot down by our machine-guns a few yards from our lines. There was no retreating when a

certain percentage of the men had fallen as there is among civilized troops. The sword, then, spread Islam with the greatest rapidity, and spread it in two directions : one North-Eastward till it had penetrated the heart of Asia and converted the wandering Turks, cousins of the Huns ; the other Westward through Egypt and North Africa, then across the Straits of Gibraltar into Spain, where a State was planted which continued practically till the days of Christopher Columbus to uphold the Crescent in the West. This, then, is the position. In the midst of the Dark Ages Europe is threatened by Islam from two directions. Like an immense pair of pincers, the Mohammedans were closing in from East and West. In the East they were held at bay for eight centuries by Constantinople ; in the West they were cutting deeper and deeper into the Continent, for in the West there was at first nothing to stop them.

But at last they found a resistance. Among the people who had drifted into the decaying Empire of Rome were the Franks. They had crossed the Rhine and conquered the old Roman province of Gaul, which henceforth became Frankland or France. The Franks were thus a German race, and they stretched eastward to the Elbe—the river that empties itself into the North Sea just by Hamburg at the base of Schleswig-Holstein, the isthmus which leads up to Denmark—and westward as far as the Mohammedan Moors, who had already crossed the Pyrenees from Spain, would allow them to extend. On this western frontier, then, the critical struggle must take place, and it occurred when the Moors tried to capture the shrine of St. Martin at Tours on the Loire—one of the richest shrines in Europe—but were broken by the Frankish king, Charles the Hammer, who defeated them in one of the decisive battles in the world's history, namely, at Poitiers, in 732. This is the Great Poitiers ; there is a Little Poitiers : a local

struggle between English and French of which we make a good deal; but this occurs several centuries later, during our first Hundred Years' War with France.

The Moslem pincers had then been stopped—Eastward by Constantinople, Westward by Charles Martel. His son, Pepin the Short, and his grandson, Charles the Great or Charlemagne, pushed their conquests farther and farther South till in the days of Charlemagne the Franks ruled from the Ebro—or at least from the Pyrenees—to the Elbe—a vast Empire indeed for those days. And now we come to the most striking part of the story. During the whole of this Dark period the old capital city, Rome, had been in decay. Threatened again and again by barbarians, she had more than once found safety and protection in the courage of the head of the Christian Church in Rome—the Pope. But the Pope, continually harassed as he was, felt that if only he could gain a champion to fight his battles he could devote himself all the more whole-heartedly to his real work of spreading the kingdom of God. Particularly was he in need of protection from the Lombards, a German tribe who had settled in Italy. And it was to gain safety from these that he made Charlemagne a most flattering offer: if he would come to the rescue of the Holy See and subdue the Lombards, he should be crowned Emperor in St. Peter's.

Charlemagne did not hesitate an instant. Adding at Milan the iron crown of Lombardy to the Frankish crown he already wore at Aachen, he marched on to Rome, and there, on Christmas Day in the year 800, he received at the Pope's hands an Imperial crown.

Here, then, is a transformation. Out of the murk and confusion of the Dark Ages a new Empire emerges four centuries after the fall of the old.

When the old Empire fell, its spirit, the Church, lived disembodied and in constant danger of extinction through a perilous four centuries. Now, however, it had taken to itself another body ; and thus the defender of Christendom in the West, the Frank King of Aachen, becomes first King of Lombardy, and then head, with the Pope—for it was a double sovereignty—of the Holy Roman Empire.

Let us now look for a moment at this new Empire and compare it with the old. In the first place it is much smaller. It includes only Gaul, a strip of Spain, and part of Italy. The whole of the East, the region of Constantinople, is beyond its control, and, indeed, rather contemptuous of it. But, on the other hand, it contains areas never ruled at all by Rome. All beyond the Rhine to the Elbe—at the mouth of which Charlemagne founded Hamburg to keep off the Danes—was land which had never acknowledged the rule of Rome.

Then let us see how the two differed in civilization. Although much of the learning and culture of Rome had been kept alive by the Roman Church—whose language even to-day is the Latin of Old Rome—yet the work of spreading enlightenment among the newly planted barbarians, Goths, Vandals, and others, was necessarily slow ; and Charlemagne himself was practically illiterate. It is said that he kept writing materials beside his bed, so that if he were sleepless at night he could sit up and practise his letters. What a contrast to an Emperor-scholar like Marcus Aurelius ! Yet it must not be thought that Charlemagne disdained learning. He was, indeed, fully alive to its value, and brought learned Englishmen like Alcuin from the Northumbrian monasteries of Tyne, Tees, and Wear to teach his subjects. English influence is thus very ancient in Germany. Alcuin may be regarded perhaps as the forerunner of Shakespeare in this respect. Nor was



his reign a secluded one. He was in touch with Haroun al-Raschid, Caliph of Bagdad (we shall come across Bagdad in a very different connexion presently), the hero of the Arabian Nights, and his cathedral at Aachen is built on Byzantine or Constantinople lines. Such, then, was the first Holy Roman Emperor. The history of the Empire as a whole is best read in Bryce's great book. All I can do is to pick out such points in its history—it was destroyed by Napoleon—as affect my immediate purpose.

Theoretically the position of Emperor was elective. The various princes of the Empire were supposed to meet on the death of the Emperor and choose one of their number in his place (hence their title of Elector), just as the Cardinals meet in conclave on the death of a Pope to choose a Cardinal to succeed him. (I was present in Rome during the eight days of the election of Pius X in 1903.) But in practice the tendency was to elect the son of the former Emperor; and thus we get the great ruling houses which kept the Imperial office in their grasp for generations, as, for instance, the Hohenstaufen, and later the Hapsburgs—a name which brings us up, indeed, to the present day, for the Hapsburgs are still ruling in their ancient Archduchy of Austria. We might, indeed, say that the old Emperor of Austria is the *real* Emperor; some people would, in fact, be inclined to call him *the* Emperor, and leave out the words "of Austria" altogether, since he is the heir to the Empire of the days when there was but one Imperial throne—that of the Hapsburgs, when the Emperor of Russia was still buried in the interior of his vast territories at Kieff or Moscow, and when the Emperor of Germany was simply Elector of Brandenburg or King of Prussia. But we are running ahead too fast.

The Empire of Charlemagne soon broke up. His

grandsons divided it among them at Verdun in 843 (Verdun is one of the great frontier fortresses of France to-day), and the way in which they divided it is interesting and important. Charles took West Frankland or old Gaul, and from this grew slowly modern France. Ludwig took East Frankland or Germany, which remained a patchwork of electorates, duchies, prince-bishoprics, and so on—some so small as to have an army of no more than half a dozen privates and four officers—right up into the nineteenth century. But most interesting of all is the portion of Charlemagne's eldest grandson. It included, as one might expect, the two capitals Aachen and Rome, and all the land in between, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Alsace-Lorraine, Switzerland, Lombardy, and, since his name was Lothar, it was called Lothar's Kingdom, or Lothringen, or—in French—Lorraine. Now here at last is a word to fire our interest! It is the key to more European history, to more of the present war, than can easily be told. Suffice it, then, to say that Lothar's portion, lying as it did between France and Germany, and belonging to neither, became a bone of contention, a source of trouble from the day of its foundation to the present moment. At one point in its history it nearly rises to the dignity of a separate kingdom—as all who have read Sir Walter Scott's "Quentin Durward" and remember the long struggle between Louis XI and Charles the Bold (who ruled in Brussels) will remember. But Charles was *too* bold (he ought properly to be called "the Rash"); he attempted to conquer the unconquerable Swiss. He was killed in battle, and his dreams of sovereignty passed, while the foxy Louis—son of the King whom Joan of Arc had crowned in the Cathedral of Reims (long before Prussian shells were thought of)—profited by his death to secure for ever the supremacy of the French Crown. Henceforth Lorraine belongs

sometimes to Germany, sometimes to France ; it was French up to 1870, and then the Germans took it. But to-day, in Paris, may be seen in the Place de la Concorde, among the statues of the cities of France, the statue of Strasburg, the capital of Lorraine. It was covered with mourning wreaths till the war began ; but still on its pedestal there is, I believe, a vacant space—a space whereon shall be cut at a future date the year of its recovery :—

Lost 1870.

Regained ———.

Thus we see the continuity of history. To understand the question of Lorraine we have to enter into the counsels of Charlemagne's grandson ; we have to go back a thousand years ; and we may also allow ourselves to look forward into the future to fill in a vacant space on a statue in Paris.

We are now gradually concentrating on our subject. The Frank Empire has gone ; France has broken from it and is living her own life ; Lorraine pursues her uneasy and undetermined course immediately to her eastern flank, and to the east again—to the east of Lorraine, that is to say—we at last see Germany.

And it is with Germany that we are most immediately concerned. I have already referred to the patchwork character of this area ; but I wish now to emphasize this fact : the patches are of varying size and importance. Some are almost microscopically small : Weimar in the days of Goethe raised a few hundred men as its army ; others—Austria, for instance—are powerful enough to claim a more or less continuous leadership and to monopolize the Imperial throne ; others again, though still called electorates, will one day become kingdoms—e.g. Hanover, Saxony, Bavaria, Würtemberg. There

is, however, one electorate in particular to which I wish to draw attention, and that is the electorate of Brandenburg.

Now recently I had the curiosity to visit Brandenburg. It lies about thirty miles to the west of Berlin, but beyond a great stone Roland that stands up, some thirty feet high, from the middle of the pavement in front of the Town Hall, there is practically nothing of interest ; I believe, however, that it is noted for its hams. Yet this little town, quiet and empty as it now appears on the Havel, with its vast barges moving continually to and fro, is a seat and centre of world importance, for it is nothing less than the empty shell of the egg from which was hatched that ferocious eagle whose beak and claws are at the present moment tearing Europe.

The ruler of Brandenburg was also head of an order of crusading knights, the knights of the Teutonic order. But these crusaders did not waste their energies on the Turks and infidels of the Holy Land ; they were more interested in the heathen to the east of them—the Prussians. These Prussians were subdued—whether they used Prussian blue as our own ancient Britons used woad I cannot say, but they were an equally primitive people—and they gradually disappeared under the rule of the Brandenburg knights. Indeed, according to the French historian Lavissee in his wonderful little “*Vue générale de l’histoire de l’Europe*,” there is no such people as the Prussians, they are really all Brandenburgers, just as the Britons who “never shall be slaves” are, as a matter of fact, mainly Anglo-Saxons—that is, low Germans. The extension of Brandenburg eastwards over Prussia meant a great increase in its importance and influence among its German neighbours, and that importance and influence was still further increased by events which, occurring farther south—in the Mediterranean region, in fact—com-

pletely altered the history and destinies of Europe. We must therefore break off our story of Brandenburg for a while—but not for long—to see what those fateful events were.

The thousand years of Constantinople's resistance were at an end. Whereas Rome fell before the Barbarians in 410, Constantinople fell before the Turks in the middle of the fifteenth century. Into the full effects of that great catastrophe we cannot pretend to enter; they will be dealt with again in the third essay. All I have time to say now is that the great revival of learning which resulted from the fall of Constantinople led to yet another revival of the utmost importance—a revival in religion: the Reformation. Now the leader of this movement was, of course, the German Luther, and the effect of his work was not only to split Christendom into warring sections and thus destroy the mediæval unity of Europe, but to split the Empire also into Protestant and Catholic Powers, which, like the soldiers of the dragon's teeth, fought each other till they could fight no longer. The war was known as the Thirty Years War and ravaged Germany during the days of our James I, who did all he could to stop it, and his son, Charles I. At its close the population of Germany was half what it had been at its beginning, and whole tracts that had been fruitful farmland before the war had reverted to their original forest condition when the Treaty of Westphalia brought the war to a close in 1648. Yet the war had done one thing. Luther had been forced to look for support against Pope and Emperor among the princes of northern Germany and the Baltic region, who were strengthened in consequence in their idea of Divine Right: thus it came about that the Reformation gave Brandenburg still further opportunities of development on lines more or less independent of the Empire. At any rate, it is just about 1650 that we come upon the name of the real

founder of Brandenburg's greatness, the Great Elector as he is called, who ruled from 1640 to 1688. He it was—his name was Frederick William—who brought Brandenburg nearer Prussia by capturing the province which lay between the two, Pomerania, and thus at a stroke multiplied the significance of his electorate. Indeed, the word Brandenburg is already becoming too small for such an ambitious and enterprising State, and it is not long, only a few years, indeed, after the death of the Great Elector—in 1701, to be quite correct—that the change comes, and the simple Electorate of Brandenburg blossoms forth as the Kingdom of Prussia. Curiously enough, thirteen years afterwards its western neighbour, the Elector of Hanover, also became a king, for in 1713 he ascended the throne of England as George I.

When we find ourselves free to talk of the King of Prussia we feel that we are beginning to make headway ; and, indeed, Prussia herself helps us by forging ahead more rapidly during the next half-century than she had ever done before. The second King of Prussia had a mania for soldiering ; he increased his forces from 38,000 to 83,000 men, and his chief delight was to drill and parade them. To provide the money they required, he fed his Court on boiled mutton and the plainest of food generally, while his Giant Guards ("The Romance of a Regiment," by J. R. Hutchinson, gives their complete history) were the talk of Europe. I am not certain, but I can quite imagine that it was this King who introduced the goose-step into the Prussian Army—that parade march which so astonishes those who see it for the first time ; its stiffness and perfect uselessness exactly fit his character. A good deal about him is to be found in Macaulay's lively Essay on Frederick the Great ; he it was who exalted the military nature of the Prussian kingship, who sacrificed everything for military power and who seemed to think only in

terms of soldiers. Voltaire was indeed right when he said : " War is the industry of Prussia." Yet he made no real use of his forces. That was the destiny of his son, Frederick the Great, the most important name we have hitherto come across. As a young man he quarrelled violently with his father, who once tried to strangle him with the window cords ; more than once he went into banishment, but usually managed to soften his father's heart by picking up some alien giant and packing him off as a peace-offering to Berlin. At this period Frederick was, in short, not in sympathy with the Prussian Court ; its life seemed narrow and cramped to him, and he preferred the more brilliant life of the French.

When, however, he succeeded to the throne he became the real upbuilder of Prussia, and his method of establishing the greatness of his own realm is best expressed in his own words, " He is a fool," he says, " and that nation is a fool, who, having the power to strike his enemy unawares, does not strike and strike his deadliest." Such was his amiable policy ; and he was not long in acting on it, for he was possessed of real military genius. The throne of Austria was occupied by a woman, Maria Theresa. So, without the shadow of an excuse, Frederick invaded the territories of his neighbour and tore Silesia from her—this in the War of the Austrian Succession, which kept, with its sequels, Frederick, Prussia, Europe, and, indeed, even distant India and North America, in a turmoil for a quarter of a century from 1740. Silesia is that part of Germany which is in between Poland and Bohemia, the valley of the Upper Oder, with Breslau as its capital, and stretching to the south-east of Berlin. He also began to carve up the defenceless and divided kingdom of Poland and share it with his neighbours, Russia and Austria ; though his taking of West Prussia from Poland is perhaps less blameworthy than his attack on Silesia,



since it was already largely German and lay between his eastern and western dominions.

The lead Prussia thus established in Germany was emphasized by the smallness of many of the other independent States. A kingdom whose ruler lived—one might say even slept—in uniform, and which could place nearly a hundred thousand men in the field was bound to dominate States whose armies reached only a few hundreds, as was the case of Weimar, even a few scores or merely a dozen or so, as was the case with still smaller States. The shoulder-to-shoulder style of fighting, the solid column which, in its forward march, reminded onlookers of the Roman Legion or the Greek Phalanx, the order to reserve fire until the whites of the enemy's eyes were visible, the straight line which the "dashing white sergeant" produced by passing his pike horizontally along the backs of his privates—all these are characteristic features of the Prussian Army of the period, and of much later periods, even, to some extent, down to the present day, when the German regiments carry their colours into battle. But the Prussian soldier, the Pomeranian Grenadier, has not always tramped solidly to victory through the enemy's lines, and before long Prussia, fine fighting Power though she had proved herself to be when led by the genius of Frederick the Great, was tasting the bitterness of defeat.

I must leave my chief reference to the French Revolution, which broke out only a few years after the death of Frederick the Great, till my essay on France. All I can say about it here is as regards its effect on Prussia. The Prussian King wished to help restore the Bourbons to the throne, and to that end he marched his dense columns against the new Republic. But his serried ranks were powerless against the frantic artillery fire of those ill-equipped *sans-culottes* of Dumouriez, who blew the supporters



of the exiled Bourbons to pieces from the tableland of Valmy on September 20, 1792, a tableland that has been prominent also in the fighting of September, 1914—the plateau of Argonne: the chopping-block whereon the French dismember the Barbarians. The Prussians have learnt nothing—at least in the way of open-order fighting. The Argonne has seen a second Valmy, with British rifles doing the work of Dumouriez' cannon, and Chalons, where Attila was defeated, is near by.

Nor was Valmy the extent of the damage which Prussia suffered at the hands of the Revolution. When Napoleon, with the military genius which has always appealed to the French spirit, organized the Revolution and drove French armies over the Continent like ploughs to break up the crusted monarchies of his day and give an opening for the seeds of freedom, Prussia suffered more than any other German State. At Weimar, Napoleon gave a theatrical performance to “a pitful of kings”; one of the sentries outside the theatre was reprimanded by his sergeant for giving the Imperial salute to a German royalty. “He is only a king,” said the sergeant. During these days at Weimar, Napoleon tried to urge Goethe to write a play on the greatness of Cæsar as an offset to Shakespeare's tragedy, which turns merely on Cæsar's death. In short, Napoleon was lording it pretty imperially over the Germans he had just beaten at Jena. But all this was mild as compared with the treatment he meted out to Prussia (the ex-champion fighter of Europe). As we go through the Sans-Souci Palace at Potsdam to-day the guide calls our attention to the writing-desk of Frederick the Great, and as we look at it we notice that the leather covering has been partly ripped off. When we ask how this piece of destruction occurred, we are told that it is the work of Napoleon himself, who carried off the leather he had thus torn away as a memento

of the soldier he so much admired. His treatment of Prussia generally is on a par with this piece of high-handedness ; and, indeed, Queen Louisa went so far as to wait on him and beg him to show some consideration for her stricken people. Hardy, in his "Dynasts," has a vivid picture of the meeting, and, indeed, of many another incident of these stirring days.

But there is a tide in the affairs of men, and Napoleon in his turn was forced back. He had been obliged to attempt an impossible task—the task of conquering Russia, the impenetrable. Why he was compelled to undertake this impossibility we shall learn later. Suffice it for the present, then, to say that the capture of Moscow, so far from ending the Russian war with a French victory, led only to Napoleon's own undoing, since no capital is worth entering so long as an army unbeaten is in the field. Rolled back across the Russian frontiers, he found himself in hostile Germany, and was again defeated in the Battle of the Nations at Leipsic, in October, 1813, where Russians and Germans fought side by side against the French (the Germans were glad of the Slavs then, they said nothing in disparagement of Russian civilization in 1813). Leipsic, coming as it did at the end of the disastrous retreat from Russia, completed the downfall of Napoleon, for Waterloo, of which we think so much, was only the knock-out blow which we gave our great antagonist as he struggled up bravely after the count-out had been nearly reached at Leipsic.

The Battle of the Nations has been commemorated by a monstrous monument which I have seen only under its covering of scaffold-poles, but if one can judge by the photographs, it is the most brutal and yet the most child's-box-of-bricks-like of any of the modern German attempts to make one's flesh creep in monumental masonry. Great, lowering, frozen

faces glare at the beholder, rough, heavy, and dull, while, if I remember aright, here and there the projecting eyebrows and nose-ridges have been used in true Prussian fashion, as a sort of sentry-box for other gaunt and stony figures ; quite an unworthy—and unshapely—monument (from a distance it looks as though it had been turned out of a mould like a blancmange) of a very great event, an event, moreover, which ushered in a remarkable period, the period of Prussia's greatest progress, when she succeeded in adding intelligence and education to her traditional iron discipline in war.

Now we have all been told how wise it is to learn from the enemy, and Prussia, during these early years of the nineteenth century, was more profitably engaged, both for herself and for humanity, than she had ever been before. Throughout this period after liberation from France, she kept steadily in view, of course, the attainment of military strength ; but she had the wisdom to realize that arms are more than armies, and that the real might of a people rests on its general strength of body, mind, and soul, even more than on its massed battalions. And it is in the means she took, the far-sighted measures she adopted, to build up the all-round strength of her people that Germany is most worthy of study, not necessarily of imitation, since one nation's meat may well be another nation's poison, but yet of close and careful study. The great names in her service are very numerous during this period—though we in England know all too little of either the men or their work. I well remember how flat Sir John Seeley's biography of one of them—perhaps the greatest, Stein—fell, although it was the chief work of one of our greatest historians. Nobody seemed interested in Stein or to care to be told what he had accomplished. Yet he and his fellow-workers, men like Scharnhorst and Humboldt, gave to Prussia not

only an improved military system, on the lines of universal military service, but also an educational system which has put Germany in the forefront of Europe. New universities were founded, a system of public secondary education on a large scale was started a century before we thought of anything of the kind, and public interest in the arts and sciences was fostered as a State duty for which the State largely paid. But chief of all, perhaps, in importance was the way in which Prussia handled that change which, spreading from England, where it had just originated, was bound to reach the continental States sooner or later, the change we refer to as the industrial revolution, the change which had turned England from an agricultural into a manufacturing country.

This change had been allowed to go on unchecked, unguided, and unregulated in England because England was so busy fighting, first the French Revolution and afterwards Napoleon, that she seemed to have no time or energy left for putting her own house in order. The result was that our manufacturing cities grew up anyhow, and Goldsmith's lines—

Woe to the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay—

were becoming more terribly true every month. So great indeed was the deterioration and so long unchecked that even to-day we are only just beginning to tackle the problem. We are now engaged in making a sort of Doomsday survey of our school-children ; and the army of doctors and nurses who probe the teeth and ears and noses and mouths and examine the eyes of the children in our schools to-day, together with the vast array of cooks who provide and serve up free halfpenny and penny dinners to multitudes of these same children daily, are engaged only in a belated attempt to put right

what ought never to have been allowed to go wrong—the physique of our population. Cobbett was not, indeed, exaggerating when early in the nineteenth century he described the Birmingham of his day—and inferentially therefore every like town—as a Hell-hole, a place of torment in which an Imperial race was wasting away (through the short-sighted greed of gain of the manufacturers and the Government) to the point of being physically unfit to bear their world-wide burdens—in proof whereof witness the number of rejections, and the reasons for them, in the recruiting of Lord Kitchener's successive armies, rejections which show that though the spirit is willing the flesh is weak indeed—“*sans* eyes, *sans* ears, *sans* teeth, *sans* everything,” as Shakespeare says. Our utilitarian money-grubbers, who had turned England into a Tom Tiddler's Ground where everybody was exclusively employed in picking up gold and silver, had forgotten that even the gains they were making out of the nation's physical health were safe so long only as the nation as a whole was physically fit to keep the enemy from—we won't say the sacred soil of England, because greed had hoofed it into mud and stamped down all the fair flowers of the England of Shakespeare's and Milton's day; let us say instead the vaults in the Bank of England, real heart of the Empire. Army service meant to them only an annoying dislocation of the labour market; they did not encourage even volunteering. Thus in the end even wealth cannot accumulate if men decay and the martial spirit is discouraged. The Germans learned from our misfortunes, and, looking ahead with a foresightedness which to us seems quite unattainable, they made provision for the orderly and healthy growth of their towns; their martial spirit needed no reorganizing. They ushered in the industrial system, without which they would never have gained the wealth necessary to their fight-

ing forces, in such fashion that it left largely undisturbed the ancient agricultural life which is the backbone of a nation's real strength—"a stout peasantry, a country's pride," as Goldsmith calls it—and, indeed, much also of that picturesque town and rural life which has come down from the Middle Ages more completely in Germany perhaps than anywhere else in Europe. They accomplished this change so sensibly by a precaution which seems simple enough to us now that we are too far gone to adopt it. Each growing town acquired the land round its outskirts, and thus, as the town grew, its growth was regulated in the public interests: its streets were laid out broadly and well, public spaces were adequately provided, and lastly—and perhaps chiefly—all the increment in value, all the increased ground-rents which resulted from turning fields and woods into building land, came in the form of public income to the municipal chest. Thus German towns have as a rule no rates to speak of, and yet they have plenty of money for municipal purposes. I have lost myself more than once in the State-wood or town-wood of Coblentz; again, once when I was speaking admiringly of the new Frankfort Town Hall to a Frankfort wine-merchant he said: "Yes; and it would have cost only another hundred thousand pounds to bring it down to the river and give it a river-front." But it is perhaps at Nüremburg that we see the results of this care and forethought—so different from the "one step enough for me" attitude which masquerades among us in England under the name of practicality—at its best.

That ancient city is as completely surrounded by its old walls as Chester, and there seems to be hardly a single modern house within their precincts. In the Castle the Iron Maiden and other relics remind us of mediæval cruelty and superstition. Within its shadow stand the houses of Hans Sachs and Albert

Dürer, filled with treasures. But as one rests at the foot or on the rampart of the great tower one looks in vain for the manufacturing districts—and yet one knows that it is an industrial centre of importance. All round the walls one sees fields and open spaces, and in the middle distance one of the most beautifully planned museums I know—a museum which is arranged like a series of furnished chambers and fitted shops, studies, and workrooms of the different periods of German history. But still there is no sign of smoke or pollution in the scene before you. If, however, the day be clear, then right in the distance, beyond the hills and so placed that the smoke is carried away from the city of which the inhabitants are so proud, one may make out the chimneys of the Nüremburg trades.

The excellent financial system which underlies all this town-planning gives the cities of Germany, moreover, an independence of which our English corporations have no idea. Whereas the City Council of every great English town is continually obliged to beg permission from Government Departments to raise loans for public works, or to waste the rate-payers' money and send up the rates in the costly business of getting private Bills through Parliament, the German city goes uninterruptedly on its own way, laying out its parks, preserving its ancient buildings, planning its own extensions, and rearing its splendid State or municipal theatres, opera-houses, galleries, and libraries for the continued and recreative education of its adult citizens, as well as its schools, colleges, and technical institutes for its children and youths : and all paid for, be it remembered, out of the increment value, the ground-rents, of the suburban lands it had the foresight to buy up during the very period in which so many of our own town councillors were making their fortunes by speculative building on the outskirts of our



English towns—by preying, one might almost say, on our common necessities. While the Mayor (a paid official) of a German town was a public servant, working hard in the interests of the community, the rulers of our own towns were only too often making money in ways which were little short of treason to the interests which they had been chosen to guard. It must also be borne in mind that Prussia has always aimed at feeding herself in wartime, and therefore encouraged agriculture strongly all through the period of her industrial revolution; whereas we let agriculture decay in the interest—as we supposed—of industry. The fostering of agriculture was as great a counterpoise to the evils of the German industrial revolution as any.

I have been describing the most fruitful constructive period in Prussian history. The work accomplished during those years was so apparently pacific that it is small wonder that many who followed its course were deceived as to its true object. Thus Cobden, in 1838, said: "The Government of Prussia is the mildest phase in which absolutism ever presented itself. The King, a good, just man, has, by pursuing a systematic course of popular education, shattered the sceptre of despotism even in his own hand and has for ever prevented his successors from gathering up the fragments"—a statement which only shows how deceptive appearances may be and how ready we are to read our own wishes into whatever we see. For Cobden was a pacifist, and he was evidently unable to realize that the parent of all this progress was really War and its manifold necessities.

Europe had not long to wait, however, before the underlying militarism of Prussia began again to reveal itself. Elsewhere in Germany, doubtless, the war spirit was in abeyance. Thus, for instance, Thackeray, writing in 1855 from Weimar, says:



"I think I shall never see a society more simple, charitable, courteous, gentlemanlike than that of the dear little Saxon city where the good Schiller and the great Goethe lived and were buried." But Weimar is not Berlin, and the little city on the Ilm which stands for so much in real German culture was no match for her Grenadier neighbour, who had for the time being disguised himself in the robe of a schoolmaster; sooner or later Weimar would assuredly be drawn also into the vortex of militarism, whether she liked it or no.

Prussia was, then, preparing for fresh military efforts by education and by establishing industries as well as by equipment and drill. She had mobilized, not only her soldiers but also her schoolmasters and philosophers, her merchants and traders, even—if possible—her artists and poets, the least disciplinable of mankind. But she valued all these resources and aspects of her national life in terms of soldiers. Like most other States, she had spasms of revolution in that year of revolutions 1848; but she came through this crisis not greatly altered, and in 1864 she began her next series of aggressive wars. She had then at her head three men whose names have been as deeply graven in European history as any—King William I, Bismarck, and Moltke, whose nephew was prominent early in the present war, and under their guidance she went forth to conquer.

The revolution year 1848 had seen a rebellion in Schleswig-Holstein—the isthmus which connects Denmark with Germany—against the Danes. This rebellion had been helped by Prussia, and in less than twenty years after it Prussia, helped by Austria, was in possession of the isthmus, which added so greatly to the scanty Prussian coast-line. This, then, was the first blow—and a very successful one it was; but in 1866 the partners who had brought it off quarrelled about it, and so we come to the second

of the three wars to which Prussia owes so much. This was the Six Weeks War of 1866 against Austria, with Sadowa as its chief battle—a six weeks war because Prussia had the first breech-loading weapon, the needle gun, and also the field-telegraph for the first time; while Austria—unlucky in war throughout her history—was hampered, as she still is, by the stiffness and formality which she inherited from the Spaniards of our own Henry VIII's day, and which showed itself even at the funeral of the murdered Archduke Ferdinand—whose death was the excuse for the present 1914 war.

By this war Austria lost all hope of the leadership of Germany. We might, indeed, say that the Hapsburgs, like their relatives the Bourbons, unable to learn or forget anything, were no match for the ambitious Hohenzollerns, and thus in 1866 Austria was turned into the wilderness, there to befriend (upon the advice of Bismarck, who always made suggestions to help those he had conquered) the Eastern people she had hitherto tried to treat as a subject race—the Hungarians whom we have already mentioned in connection with Attila. Henceforth, therefore, we must speak of Austria as Austria-Hungary or the Dual Empire; and Hungarian problems and interests will play their part henceforth in moulding Austrian policy. Austria in, as it were, marrying Hungary had taken on her debts to the Slavs. Her eagle is a two-headed one, facing, like Janus, east and west.

Meanwhile Prussia, as we should expect of the victor, was going on from strength to strength. She too came to an arrangement with her immediate neighbour, but on very different lines from that between Austria and Hungary. She rounded on her little neighbour Hanover—then ruled by Queen Victoria's cousin—drove the King off the throne, and annexed the kingdom without any fighting worth

talking about. Thus the Hanoverians became involuntary Prussians just as the Holsteiners had become a few years earlier. But the wrath of the exiled house, the house of Cumberland, was not easily appeased ; and it was not, indeed, till about a year ago that the Hanoverian house of Guelph—or Cumberland—was united to the Hohenzollerns by the marriage of the Kaiser's daughter to Prince Ernest and the Duchy of Brunswick reconstituted.

When Prussia had digested Hanover she was ready for her next meal, and this proved indeed a dish to set before a king. It was no less than France herself.

Thus we come to the great struggle of 1870.

Now, in one way the Franco-German War was not an aggressive war on the part of Prussia. For reasons I shall explain in my next essay, France under Napoleon III, nephew of Napoleon I, was at this time launched on a policy of military adventure in some respects like that of Napoleon I himself. The Hohenzollerns had been claiming the succession to the Spanish Crown—it is curious that a Spanish succession difficulty should have cropped up again almost exactly two hundred years after that of Louis XIV—but withdrew their claim when the French insisted. This withdrawal did not, however, go far enough, and the French demanded that the claim itself should never be renewed. Such a demand was altogether excessive. This is the account of the Prussian reply to it as given in the famous Ems telegram of July 13, 1870—a telegram which, however, is usually accepted merely as Bismarck's account of the incident, with which he intended to sting the French to a declaration of war when they seemed at the last moment to hesitate about fighting : “ His Majesty writes to me : ‘ Count Benedetti spoke to me on the promenade, in order to demand from me, finally in a very importunate manner, that I should authorize him to telegraph at once that

I bound myself for all future time never again to give my consent if the Hohenzollerns should renew their candidature. I refused at last somewhat sternly, as it is neither right nor possible to undertake engagements of this kind *à tout jamais.*' "

Yet although in form France was the aggressor, in reality Prussia was glad of the war, because Bismarck saw in this great struggle a final stage in the building up of a solid Germany with Prussia as the keystone. His ambition was to turn the existing Customs Union of the numerous German States into a unified Empire, and he hoped to use France as the anvil on which the States of Germany should be welded by the shock of war into a single political unit. Thus, although the French were expecting to repeat the easy triumphs of Napoleon I's day, although all Paris was crying "To Berlin!" and the Empress Eugénie—who is still alive at Chislehurst helping the wounded, and whose recent visit to the seat of her former glory at Fontainebleau was so pathetic and ominous an event of the earlier part of 1914—said, "This is my war," although, in short, France thought that all the cards were in her own hands, yet Prussia knew differently. And the event proved Prussia right. That same winter King William of Prussia was crowned first Emperor of Germany in Versailles—that embodiment of French glory and of earlier German defeat which stands some few miles outside Paris.

Not content with this triumph, Germany insisted on a two hundred million pound indemnity from France and the cession of the two French provinces that bordered the Upper and Middle Rhine, Alsace and our old friend Lorraine. The Rhine thus became a German river except for its two ends; and with these territorial additions, taken for strategic rather than political reasons, the newly made German Empire came into existence.

But the triumph of Germany, though complete, brought the Empire no ease. Rapid recovery has been the outstanding feature of France, and after 1870 France beat even her own splendid record. In two years the immense indemnity had been paid, even though to raise the money France had been obliged to scrape herself bare of coin, and exist for a time on an unredeemable paper currency. And beyond that France was always nursing the thought of revenge. So terrible, indeed, was her temper that by 1876 Bismarck grew fearful and was on the point of reopening the war on the question of the Alsace bishoprics in order that he might have the opportunity of crushing France again before she grew too powerful.

But his ruthless project never took shape, because Queen Victoria and the Czar intervened. In its place, therefore, he steadily and successfully proceeded to build France in and isolate her behind an impenetrable wall of alliances which curved like an arch through Central Europe and represented the high-water mark of Bismarck's achievements. Thus we arrive at the celebrated Triple Alliance. Of the two Powers which Germany called to her aid, one, Austria, though a recently defeated enemy of Prussia, came naturally into the agreement, since Bismarck had prevented his King from taking any of her land in 1866, and since her ruling race and House are of German extraction—albeit cumbered by a heavy fringe of non-German subject races and linked on terms of equality with a people of Tartar origin. But as regards the third member of the Triple Alliance, Italy, a less pronounced attachment was only to be expected. Indeed, Bismarck managed to bring her in only by pitting her interests and those of France in North Africa, Tunis more particularly, against each other; and even when she was thus hooked, as it were, by the fomenting of an almost

artificial hostility between her and her neighbour of the same Latin race and Roman Catholic faith, whom Bismarck had encouraged to seek in North Africa compensation for Alsace-Lorraine, her position in the Triple Alliance was by no means comfortable.

I was in Trieste on the eve of the funeral of Humbert, the second King of Italy—the present King is only the third occupant of the Italian throne—who was murdered in 1900. On the day of the funeral itself I was in both Venice and Bologna, and what struck me most was the difference between the Austrian seaport and the two Italian cities. Trieste had a great altar in her central square, and all her churches were draped in black, whereas Venice and Bologna were merely shut up. In Trieste it was clear that the people had seized on Humbert's death as an opportunity for reminding their Austrian masters that they were still Italian in sympathy. Again, in August, 1914, I was present at a great meeting of Italians in London, called together to express sympathy with England in the war; and it was quite clear from the temper of that meeting that Italian feeling, so far from being on the side of Austria, was strongly opposed to this nominal ally of hers, for the simple reason that Austria still holds two Italian provinces, Italian Tyrol and Trieste, and furthermore, because Italy herself as a united kingdom began to arise only when Austria was pushed by France out of Lombardy; how relatively a short time back was indicated by the presence at the London meeting of the Garibaldi veterans in their red shirts, the Balaclava heroes of Italy, men who, in their day, had helped to weld Italy as Bismarck helped to weld Germany a few years afterwards, in the furnace of war. It is also significant that the Queen of Italy is a Montenegrin princess; and indeed the Balkan position is simplified by the

neutrality of Italy. Were she to join in on either side, the difficulties in the Balkans would be increased indefinitely.

Later on we shall see, indeed, that Italy ceased to be an effective member of the Triple Alliance some years before the present war broke out. Her present neutrality need not, therefore, surprise anybody, especially as the Triple Alliance is a defensive and not an offensive alliance.

During these years Germany was prospering greatly, because she was reaping the reward, not only of success in the field but also of all that careful and intelligent foresight which we have already described. She was, in fact, rapidly becoming one of the largest industrial States in the world, and was, as a consequence, increasingly anxious for fresh markets wherein to find buyers for her ever-growing surpluses.

Now, hitherto, all her energies had been taken up in establishing and maintaining her European position. Bismarck had aimed at nothing much beyond this, but the rapid growth of German trade, requiring as it did a more extended command of world markets, was already forcing Germany to look beyond Europe in the interests of her traders, without whose profits the military burdens of the Empire could not be sustained.

It was, however, just in this matter of foreign markets that Germany was most severely handicapped. The best markets are a nation's colonies, but Germany, as a military power, fully occupied with European politics, and coming late into world politics, found herself anticipated in all the best regions by her more fortunate rivals—nations like England (and even Holland), who had been obliged to develop sea-power and whose reward was colonies with their ever-growing markets. France was even better off than her conqueror, for she had still the memory,



and indeed some remains, of the overseas Empire she had lost in the eighteenth century, largely to England.

Her hard fate, the handicap of her late arrival, became henceforth the chief obstacle Germany struggled against. Treitschke, the Berlin professor of history, whose teaching to the soldiers and administrators as well as to the students who thronged his lecture-room has done so much to mould German policy in recent years, says: "Colonization which retains a uniformity of nationality has become a factor of immense importance for the future of the world. It will determine the degree to which each nation shares in the government of the world by the white race. It is quite possible that a country which owns no colonies will no longer count among the European Great Powers, however powerful it may otherwise be." And elsewhere he has this telling phrase: "Those who go to North America are entirely lost to Germany."

These views are more than the views of a historian and a philosopher: they are the expression of a real German need. "A place in the sun" was no mere arrogant demand of a Junker caste; and if only the moon could have been brought near enough to the earth to be within the German sphere of influence, German land-hunger might conceivably have been satisfied. Since, however, this was impossible, Germany's only means of getting colonies was

The good old rule . . . the simple plan,  
That those should take who have the power,  
And those should keep who can.

If Germany was so powerful in Europe, how was it, she wondered, that she was so powerless outside Europe? Her world position by no means corresponded with her European position; and that was



not only inconvenient to her traders, but humiliating to the Imperial pride of a people who believed themselves to be not only the best drilled and armed but also the best schooled people on the Continent, and who had developed the habit during the past two centuries of taking whatever they wanted by force of arms—as is, indeed, to be expected of a people whose whole career has been built up on a series of aggressive wars. Yet the fact was patent, even in the matter of language. German is a small tongue for a world language, learnt only by such foreigners as wish to reap the rewards of German research without going through the spade-work in all those arts and sciences which German scholarship has probed, whereas French is not only the language of diplomacy—even German treaties have to be in the language of the people Germany defeated in 1870—but also the patois of Europe; while as for English—if the English had only the pluck to reform their spelling instead of writing “Manchester” and pronouncing it “Liverpool,” as a Russian friend of mine once put it—English would soon be the world language, with Spanish perhaps—yes, even Spanish, because of Spain’s early mastery of the Spanish Main in Elizabeth’s day, and hence of South America—a tolerable second among European world tongues.

All these things galled the pride of our German cousins, and they began to study the map of the world with renewed earnestness. But it was not till 1888 that any very definite change came over the spirit of German policy. In that year the present—and third—Kaiser, William II, came to the throne on the deeply lamented death of his noble father, Frederick, the second German Emperor, and son-in-law of Queen Victoria, and with him the story of Germany’s development begins afresh. In two years he had dismissed Bismarck, who, with the genius of a born statesman, had not only guided Germany to

the leadership of Europe, but had also—Junker though he was—brought her a very considerable distance along the path of constitutional progress. The old pilot who had welded the Empire into an irrevocable whole and steered it through the dangers which threatened its early career was, however, dropped—to use the figure in which *Punch* recorded this daring act of the young Emperor—and having freed himself from the great Chancellor, William freed himself at the same time from Bismarck's purely European policy. "The future of Germany is on the water"; "The trident must be in our fist": such was the burden of the new policy—a world policy which was to give Germany her place in the sun. Germany must expand or explode: her surplus products, if not her surplus population, must find an outlet overseas.

But an overseas market can be reached only under certain conditions. Quite apart from the risk of storms and shipwreck, there is the risk which arises from the watchful and overwhelming Navy of a Power which already possesses all that Germany regards as necessary to her own greatness—colonies and sea power. It accordingly becomes necessary for Germany to develop her sea forces, not only for the protection of her coasts as hitherto, but also for the protection of her sea-borne trade. And she proposed to ensure this protection by building up a fleet so strong that even the Mistress of the Seas herself should hesitate before attacking it, lest she should be so crippled in the fight that she might succumb to any other Power which chose to take advantage of her weakness. Germany's naval policy is, in short, based on Wellington's maxim, that there is only one thing more terrible than a victory, and that is a defeat, and on Napoleon's, that you cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs.

But though the Kaiser and his Prussian advisers

saw quite clearly the need for a Navy, inland Germany was not quite so quick to grasp its necessity. Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, and so forth, have no seaports, and possibly some of the jealousy which marked the old Holy Roman Empire lingered still in the Empire of 1870—and the fall of Berlin would probably be a more serious affair for the German Empire than the fall of Paris would be for France, since the finding of a second capital for Germany might awaken jealousies which might seriously strain German unity. One reason why the Kaiser keeps so many castles in actual use is, I believe, that he dare not offend erstwhile sovereign States by closing their royal palaces and thus reducing them to dependencies. They are willing to have the Kaiser as their King or lord, but not to be mere subjects of Prussia.

Therefore, to secure the Navy which meant so much to them, the Prussians entered upon a great educational campaign throughout the whole of the federated German Empire. The German Navy League was founded in 1900; its postage was all paid by the Government, it organized excursions to naval bases, and in a short time it numbered a million and a half members.

But it was the seizing of the German ship *Bundesrath* by our English fleet during the Boer War that brought home, with real effectiveness to the Germans as a whole, a truth which Admiral Jellicoe was to drive home still more forcibly in 1914—namely, the extent to which the overseas trade which was so vital to them as a growing industrial nation was dependent on our English goodwill and favour—a state of affairs which galled the high-spirited German authorities excessively, and even touched the pride at last of the masses in Germany. Hence the Navy Law was passed, the Kiel Canal—through which I passed in 1912—cut, and the German

Navy rose steadily till it occupied its present position of being second only to our own. "Germany needs a Navy," said the Kaiser, "of such strength that a war even against the mightiest naval Power would involve risks threatening the supremacy of that Power."

The value of her Navy was still further increased by the astute deal which enabled her, by yielding up Zanzibar to us, to gain Heligoland—which we had seized in 1807—for herself. When Lord Salisbury made the exchange nobody thought of Germany as a possible rival at sea ; the island was, moreover, rapidly disappearing into the water. But since they took it over the Germans have changed all that ; its coast hollows have been filled in, guns have been mounted, and Heligoland now forms an excellent front and screen in the North Sea for the German Fleet.

While Germany's Fleet was growing she was also looking round the world for a colonial foothold. At one time she seemed to fix her gaze on South America, where the various republics were temptingly unstable and where the Germans were actually settled in large numbers ; but if Germany had ever turned her thoughts seriously in that direction, the Monroe Doctrine of the big brother republic in the North—the "Hands off, Europe!" policy of the United States—had to be reckoned with, and Germany turned elsewhere.

South Africa seemed a hopeful area also. Treitschke had seen in the sturdy resistance of the Boers the one failure—as he thought—in English colonial policy. Majuba seemed to him the Achilles' heel of our Empire, and German thought, stimulated by his teaching, worked in the following direction : South Africa is now relatively unimportant to England, since the English hold on Egypt, consequent upon the French agreement (of which

more anon), secures them the Suez Canal route to India. On the other hand, the Dutch both in Holland and at the Cape are a Teuton people in blood, language, and culture. The Dutch colonies are moreover still considerable, despite the weakness of Holland in Europe ; even the memory of sea-power seems more fruitful than the undisputed possession of land-power. Why should not Holland—which moreover holds the mouth of the Rhine and whose port, Rotterdam, rivals London by reason of its German trade—strike a bargain with Germany to the benefit of both and the Boers receive German help?

Now, this was not merely an academic and speculative policy. It touched the happenings of actual politics when, in 1895, Kruger said : “ I know that I may count on the Germans in future. I feel certain that when the time comes for the Transvaal to wear larger clothes Germany will have done much to bring this about. The time is coming for our friendship to be more firmly established than ever.” After this the Kaiser’s wire to Oom Paul seems less irresponsible, and it is noteworthy that the year of the Boer War (1900) is also the year of the forming of the German Navy League. But German hopes in South Africa were also doomed to disappointment. The Germans could not go to the help of the Boers because we held the seas between, and the bitterness produced among the Boers themselves by the war of 1899-1902 died down, although attempted risings in the autumn of 1914 showed that some embers still glowed in response to the fanning of Germany. It is thus not difficult to trace the connection between our own Boer War and the great war of 1914.

Another area in which Germany tried her luck was in the Far East. In the days when people talked of the partition of China among France in the south, England in the centre, and Russia in the north, Germany wondered where she came in ; and

after the Japanese had defeated China, Germany actually joined with France and Russia to rob Japan of the fruits of her victory. It was thus that Russia obtained Port Arthur and held it for a few years. Germany also obtained Kiao-Chou from China. It is thus easy to see why Japan was so quick to turn Germany out of Tsing Tau or Kiao-Chou. A German general also commanded the European troops of all nations which dealt—none too squeamishly—with the Boxer rebels in China.

Two colonies Germany did indeed manage to secure, besides various outposts—German East Africa and German South-West Africa, when the Dark Continent was divided up with a ruler on a round table; but, as the Crown Prince is reported to have said recently, “Neither of these colonies is worth twopence, for if they had been England would have had them long ago.” If, however, the two were joined, as some Germans would like, the Cape to Cairo idea of Great Britain would be thwarted.

But it must be borne in mind that however strong her desire and need for a Colonial Empire may have been, Germany could not give her whole energy to these overseas adventures, for the simple reason that throughout her history Germany has ever been first and foremost a European Power—a Power, that is to say, which must give first thought to the way things are going in Europe. And during the years of the present Kaiser’s reign the position of the German Empire as continental cock-of-the-walk has not been getting any easier; on the contrary, it has been growing more and more difficult every year. It therefore behoves us to turn for the moment back from overseas Germany—such as it is—to the Germany which lies between France and Russia.

Between France and Russia—there’s the rub! For the prostrate France of 1870 had not only recovered—we have seen that already—she had done more:

she had eluded the isolation of the Triple Alliance which Bismarck had so cunningly and laboriously built round her, and was at last befriended and partnered again in Europe—and by Russia, of all States! That is why Germany has to-day to perform the miracle of wildly flinging army corps across and across from one frontier to another, as they are most wanted, like living shuttles in a gigantic loom.

How this alliance came about must be left till the next essay. I must content myself at this point with saying simply that France not only had a friend in Europe, but that she had also the dependencies which Germany had been denied by her late arrival among the great Powers—colonies and possessions of an extent and value second only to those of England. By giving England a free hand in Egypt France had obtained a free hand in Morocco, and from Algiers, which touches Morocco, and her other African possessions she could draw troops—Moslem fighting fanatics—who would go far towards redressing the numerical deficiency of the white French Army as compared with that of Germany. Thus the Germans found themselves between inexhaustible Russia on the one hand and a France on the other which, so far from being outstripped as regards forces by the higher birth-rate of Germany, was able to draw ever-increasing numbers of first-class fighters from her African provinces.

The problem which Germany had to face was a grave one. The pressure of these two powerful States on her eastern and western frontiers was tremendous; at the same time she was building up a Navy to resist the menacing pressure, as she thought it, of the British fleets on her North Sea coasts; and to brace herself against these gigantic forces which were thus weighing upon her from three sides, Germany had to emphasize more than ever her military aspect,



not only in actual men and material but also in the character and outlook which give the real thrust to material preparation. Just as the shells of the deep-sea shell-fish increase with the intensity of the water-pressure to which they are subjected, so did the militarism of Germany increase under the conjoint pressure of England, France, and Russia, and for the same reason—self-defence.

And again, like the mollusc, she was all the while strengthening her internal resistance by drawing—or scheming to draw—the material she required to build up her defensive forces from outside her own borders.

She was faced on the west by a foe who had already tapped one such source of supply—the Moslems of North Africa, the Algerians who figure in the French Army as Turcos. Where could Germany tap a similar source of strength?

Now, an Islamic people lay quite close at hand, as a matter of fact—indeed, in Europe itself. Later we shall have to see how these Moslems, the Turks, came into Europe and what effect they produced on the lands they conquered; but that is another story, as Kipling says. All that I can say here is that the Turks are still established, though with woefully lessened prestige, in the Balkans.

The thousand years of Christianity at Constantinople had been succeeded by nearly five centuries of Moslem rule, and the Turks still stretched across the Bosphorus to the Adriatic. It was these Turks whom Germany befriended. She found Turkey “the Sick Man of Europe”; she tended him and nursed him, and when he was strong enough she armed him and drilled him till he had become her ally in all but name, her protégé in all that threatened his well-being. Nor did the Germans stop there. They were anxious to develop his resources for him in Asia Minor and financed his Bagdad Railway for him; not that there was much trade to be done



in the desolate lands of Mesopotamia through which the railway runs, but because the rail, like an artesian well, would drive deep into a people whose natural fighting qualities were heightened by the fact that their ruler was Vicegerent of Allah on earth—and the Germans were his best friends. There may be commercial possibilities in this region later, and possibly commercial rivalry with Russia for its exploitation may be one cause of this war, but primarily I think the line is strategic.

Still further to strengthen his hold over these fanatics and thus to rival the influence of England in the Moslem world—for George V. has millions of Moslem subjects in India—and to show France that Germany too had her influence in the world of Islam and could match French Turcos with genuine Turks, the Kaiser toured through Palestine—as his father Frederick had done also, I believe—visiting such German colonies as he could find there and himself preaching in a church at Jerusalem.

Nor did German enterprise stop at this twentieth-century pilgrimage. No sooner had France obtained, by agreement with England, a free hand in Morocco, which is next Algiers and carries French North Africa to the Atlantic, than Germany suddenly remembered her commercial interests in that sun-baked corner of Africa and posed once again as the champion of Islam, the Kaiser visiting the country in 1905. It is true that as regards Morocco she was unfortunate, for although at Algeciras she seemed to put a check on French projects, yet when a little later she tried to intervene more effectively by sending the gunboat *Panther* to Agadir she had to withdraw both her claims and her gunboat before the reviving vigour of the French and the support the French received from England. I well remember the caricature in, I think, *Jugend*, which represented a forlorn panther crawling shamefully out of the mud of Agadir Bay;

it was a terrible humiliation for Germany to be forced in this way to acknowledge the special interests of France in Morocco.

But Turkey still remained for her to protect—and was not Turkey the best of all the Moslem States, not only as a military Power drilled on German lines, but also as the recognized head of Islam?

It was the conviction that Turkey was sound that encouraged Germany to continue in her character of champion of Islam, but even as regards Turkey, herself Germany was unfortunate. The German plan of writing "Fatherland" from Hamburg by way of Berlin and Vienna to Constantinople (only negligible little Serbia stood in the way) and then on to Bagdad became as visionary as an "Arabian Nights" tale of the Bagdad of Haroun al-Raschid, when Abdul Hamid was driven from his throne in 1909 by a revolution that was headed by Turkish officers educated in Switzerland and elsewhere in West Europe, who called themselves the Young Turk party—and who, by the way, were less strict Moham-medans than they should have been if they were to continue to inspire the Turkish soldiers with enthusiasm. But although not violent Moslems, the new rulers of Turkey were violent Turks, and the excesses of their policy of Ottomanization—which was the Balkan equivalent of the Germanization practised by their Prussian protectors—increased the troubles they were bound to meet. Later we shall see the full effect of this revolution. For the present it will be sufficient to say that the new Government began very badly; it lost two provinces and a suzerainty, at once; but worse than that, it soon—in 1911—found itself at war with Italy for the possession of Tripoli.

We have already seen how Bismarck was able to use North Africa for getting Italy into the Triple

or Triple Alliance ; now we see this same region playing a decisive part in the break-up of this same Central European organization. " Out of Africa, always something to disturb," says the old Classic phrase, and certainly the effect of the war in Tripoli was sufficiently startling. I cannot resist, indeed, the pun which seems to summarize the whole position : " The Triplice tripped up over Tripoli." For what was the situation? Nothing less than this : a war between Germany's ally, Italy, and Germany's protégé, Turkey. We can well understand why Bernhardi regards Italy as having left the Triple Alliance in 1911—an alliance about which she had never been really keen, and which has never been an aggressive alliance. Italy's North African interest first drove her into the Triple Alliance and then drove her out again.

Well, Italy won, and took Tripoli, while Turkey was greatly weakened as a result of the war. Now this weakening of Turkey is the critical matter for us, since it enabled the little States which had formerly been under Turkey—Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro—to form themselves into a federation for the purpose of attacking Turkey and taking from her the provinces—largely Christian as regards their inhabitants—she still held in Europe. These little States fell on Turkey exactly a year and a day after the declaration of the Tripoli War, and by their united efforts—so much more successful than the isolated attack of Greece in 1897—wore down their opponent, already weakened by the Tripoli War. They say it was very curious to see the Austrian barges going down the Danube with war material for Turkey and the Russian coming up with material for Serbia. The French training of the Bulgarian artillery proved better than the German training of the Turkish Army, and before long Turkey was reduced to the tract of land stretching about

fifty miles round Constantinople—somewhat to the annoyance of most of the diplomatists of Europe, I fancy, who had been secretly hoping that Turkey would win and thus preserve the then existing balance of forces in the Balkans, and therefore also in Europe. Such, however, was not to be ; and the struggle among the victors for the spoils—inevitable when we consider, as we shall presently, the character of these various Balkan States—does not affect our story. The great fact that arises out of the war change in the Balkans is that Germany's friend and protégé, Turkey, had been beaten and broken and various obscure little States had suddenly become important, and had learnt the art of acting in concert.

All we can pause to say about these States at this point is that they were Slav—of the same race, that is to say, as Russia. The fact, then, that States of Slav or Russian blood had appeared to the south-east of Austro-Germany, that a branch of the hostile Slav race of the east had displaced the friendly Turks of the Balkans, suddenly awoke Germany to the realities of her European position, and drove away for the time being all thoughts of colonial expansion and world politics. For not only had Germany virtually lost Italian help by the troubles of Turkey, she found herself also outflanked in the south-east by her eastern enemy, Russia. Thus Germany, which had walled in France by the Triple Alliance, now in her turn found herself walled in by the Slavs. Nor is this the full extent of the trouble. Austro-Hungary, the eastern member of the German Alliance, has, as we have already seen, a heavy fringe of Slav and non-German peoples, and these were only too likely to feel the attraction of a new Slav Power in the Balkans—a Power which had surprised Europe, not only by its share in the victory over Turkey but subsequently by its

victory over the real conqueror of Turkey, Bulgaria herself. The Slav Power which could claim this record was, of course, Serbia—the insignificant obstacle of a few years previously which had stood in the way of the German flow to the east by way of Constantinople.

By 1912, however, this insignificant obstacle had grown to be a grave menace. Its three wars—Turkish, Bulgarian, Austrian—have built it up as the three Prussian wars of the 'sixties built Prussia up; its prestige was attracting the Slav subjects of Austria into its orbit, and it was already in close touch with its big brother, Russia. (So much for the German contempt for small States and small armies, like the Serbian—and the British. The Germans seem to see only what they wish to see.) Thus with the seven million Austrian Slavs drawn towards the four millions of Serbia and Montenegro, the Austrian-Italians drawn, as we have already seen, towards Italy, and the Austrian-Roumanians of Transylvania drawn to their Roumanian fellow-kinsmen to the east—not a Slav race—the German Alliance felt that its eastern member, Austria, was imperilled, and therefore the whole German position threatened, not only by the general outflanking movement of the Slav development in the south-east, but also by the counter-attraction, the strain on the loyalty of all Austrian subjects who were neither German nor Magyar—i.e. Hungarian—which this outflanking movement of the Balkan Slavs set up within the borders of the Austro-Hungarian Empire itself by the mere fact of its presence.

The situation was grave, and Germany met it with characteristic thoroughness. Sooner or later Germany would have to "hack her way through"; war was inevitable before long, especially with a ruler as unstable as William II on the throne. She therefore began to put the final touches to her pre-

parations the while she was seeking for the best opportunity of striking at the foes which threatened to encircle her. Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism—helped by France—were approaching their final struggle. If we need evidence of the fact that Germany was preparing herself to fight first and foremost for her European leadership, we may find it in two significant acts of this period: first, in the acceptance of a 60 per cent. superiority of the English Navy over the German; second, in the tax on capital which gave I know not how many millions for war purposes—largely, I believe, in the nature of fortifications and capital expenditure.

This second effort called forth the French reply: the three years' law in the Army. When each side was forcing the pace thus, war was but a matter of time and opportunity. And indeed the introduction of such large new factors on either side so disturbed the calculations of relative strength that this very uncertainty of itself brought war nearer. In particular, the disorganization resulting from the three years' law in France tempted Germany to strike.

Already had the German Powers brought Europe to the brink of war in the matter of the Balkans. No sooner was Abdul Hamid deposed, and the Young Turk party established, than, as we have seen already, Turkey lost two provinces. These were the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which Austria now turned from a protectorate—the position they had been accorded by the Treaty of Berlin in 1877—into integral parts of the Austrian Empire in 1909. Immediately Serbia was up in arms, since the two provinces were part of Old Serbia, and the little Slav kingdom expected to annex them on the break-up of Turkey. Russia, too, lent an ear to the complaint of the Serbians, which was brought to St. Petersburg by their Crown Prince, and it looked already as though fighting might take place. To

keep the peace, Sir Edward Grey proposed a conference to determine the ownership of the two provinces ; but suddenly Germany appeared " in shining armour " behind her friend Austria, and the conference was never held. Austria kept the provinces, and Germany had scored heavily, because Russia was still weak from the Japanese War, and France had not yet experienced that reawakening of her natural fighting spirit which has been so marked a feature of the last three or four years. Thus was the encircling movement checked for a while, and Turkey on the outer side of the circle—the friend who calls from beyond the Slav ring, much as Russia had called to France from beyond the ring of the Triplice some years earlier—plucked up fresh courage.

But the movement was not stopped, it was only checked, and before long the Germans had to seek another opportunity. This occurred when the heir to the Austrian throne, the Archduke Ferdinand, and his wife were assassinated in the streets of Serajevo, the capital of the newly annexed province. This murder is full of dark aspects. Ferdinand favoured a federal instead of a dual Empire, and on his accession would have granted fuller rights to the Austrian Slavs. There is a strong suspicion, therefore, that his death was welcomed by the Austrians who supported the Dual Monarchy arrangement. And suspicion goes even deeper. Ferdinand remonstrated after the failure of the first attempt on his life against the total lack of protection afforded him. But whether his death was engineered or not, Austria demanded such humiliating terms from Serbia, whose papers and hotheads were accused of having brought about the crime, that Serbia, relying on the support of her co-religionist and blood-brother, Russia, refused. Russia seconded her refusal, and the crisis had arrived. Austria was on the point of coming to terms, however, with her

Slav neighbours, since Serbia was prepared for almost any arrangement that would save her from a third war, but Germany, coming forth a second time suddenly, as she had done before in the matter of the annexed provinces in 1909, rattling her sword in her scabbard, with the mailed fist and all the rest of it, demanded—evidently for her own ends since Austria was almost agreed with Serbia—that the Russians should proceed no further in massing troops: that Russia should stand aside while once more

An Austrian army awfully arrayed  
By bold battery besieged Belgrade,

and disband her army while Slavs were still liable to slaughter by Germans. When Russia refused, Germany declared war, and invaded Belgium to get at France without a frontal attack on the line of French forts between Luxemburg and Switzerland.

The pressure Germany thus felt herself to be resisting was, however, of her own making. Every State has neighbours across its borders; but Germany's tradition has been to remind her neighbours of her presence by sabre-rattling. That is why she complains of pressure on both east and west, a very different pressure from that which results when a State is content merely to guard her integrity and protect her frontiers. But that has never satisfied Germany, for without aggressive war Germany thinks she would still be the patchwork of the Middle Ages or else divided between France and Russia.

Germany thought in July 1914 that at last the favourable moment for war had come, for although Germany speaks of herself as "hacking her way through," she does not mean by that that she is merely hacking at the encircling folds of Pan-Slavism. She means, further, that she is hacking her way through not only her European difficulties,



but her world difficulties as well, and that when the war is ended not only will she be freed from the tremendous continental pressure of recent years, but also and by the same war she will be rid of the maritime and colonial handicaps under which she has hitherto run her race. The intensity and destructiveness of an explosion depend upon the confinement of the charge ; and the fact that Germany finds herself practically inside a Slav pocket with the French to put the lid on gives to the German military movement an intensity and a violence which, the Germans believe, will not only shatter the enclosing masses, but also supply in addition the energy that will carry the Germans to the colonial Empire and world dominion they believe to be rightly theirs. The German Chancellor tacitly admitted to our Ambassador at Berlin that it was the French colonies—with their Turcos—that the Germans were after.

For Germany this is, then, a second war of liberation, a striking off of shackles, European and oceanic. She means to do what England did under Chatham's leadership : win an Empire on the battle-fields of Europe. The hour seemed favourable to Germany—as favourable, that is to say, as any could be in a situation which was in reality a desperate one, and from the very desperation of which the Germans proposed to draw their strength in the war their fate had rendered inevitable. It seemed favourable because Russia was still supposed to be suffering from the effects of the Japanese War, and to be behindhand with her frontier troop railways, while also there was always the possibility of disaffection among the Revolutionaries and the Jews, Poles and others. France was plunged in the midst of the Caillaux trial, which bore some resemblance to earlier scandals like the Panama and Dreyfus affairs, which had shaken France to her foundations. There had also been ministerial confessions that the Army

was not so well equipped as it ought to be, and was suffering from the reorganization necessitated by the Three Years' Law. England was on the verge of civil war over the Home Rule question; the Army was split into political factions, and rebel armies were being formed in Ireland (had not Treitschke said, "England's mishandling of Ireland shrieks to Heaven"?). India was full of Hindu sedition; and we had alienated the fighting Indian Moslems by leaving Turkey to her fate in the Tripoli War with Italy. We know how Germany miscalculated, as indeed she had already miscalculated in the similar case of the Boers; but at the time of the Home Rule split, when even the King was calling fruitless conferences, to the German mind, which can judge of events—as we all can—simply in the light of its own ideas and experience, these signs, in England especially, were propitious. Finally, it seemed impossible to the Germans that England, under a Liberal Government, could ever bring herself to fight on the side of the Czar and his Cossacks. Therefore the alarm was given, war was declared, and the Germans set out on that perilous road which more gifted races have essayed to traverse without success—the road to world supremacy.

England's attitude in the crisis must be left to a later essay, but nobody who wishes really to understand the march of these latest events, especially as they affected England, can afford to neglect the admirable Blue Book which the Government has issued for a penny.

## II

### CHARACTER

LIKE Carpentier, the White Hope (how distant that phrase sounds!), who is now, I believe, in the French Army air service, Germany relied entirely on a rapid attack in her first encounter with her old foe France to free herself for her fight with Russia.

Now fighting of this description is a matter of intensified energy ; and intense energy has, as a rule in the history of warfare, come from one source and one source only, and that is basically religion, though working out in forms which to us appear of course hardly religious.

We have already seen how great fighters the Mohammedans are, how eager both France and Germany have shown themselves to be in tapping these sources of religious fanaticism each to her own advantage. But Germany has aimed at developing the same religious intensity of belief in war among her own people. From the very beginning this has been a characteristic note of German fighting. Frederick the Great in his younger days expressed—always in French—the noblest sentiments ; and doubtless believed that all his aggressions—e.g. in Silesia—were for the furtherance of the exalted ideals to be found in his “Anti-Machiavel.” In 1870 it appears again. I remember seeing in an old number

of *Punch* the following parody of the Prussian King's pious letters to his wife :—

This comes to say, my dear Augusta,  
We've had another awful buster.  
Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below—  
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow !

It is not therefore altogether an innovation for the present Kaiser to bring God into the battlefield as the sons of Eli attempted to do when they shouldered the Ark of the Covenant. The German sword-arm is to be strengthened by the same spirit as that which strengthened the sword-arm of Israel : “ The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.” The Germans are the new Chosen People, the Kaiser is a new Joshua who shall lead his fellow-tribesmen into the Promised Land after forty years of following the pillar of fire and cloud in the wilderness, a new David “ who hath slain his ten thousands ” and the Lord's anointed. He speaks by Divine Right as one who has been admitted to the counsels of the Most High and been permitted to share with Him the leadership of the world's appointed conquerors—and saviours. It seemed, indeed, quite fitting that the Kaiser himself should preach in the German mission church when he made his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the home of Theocracy. This is how he speaks to his troops going to the war—

“ Remember that the German people are the chosen of God. On me, on me as German Emperor, the Spirit of God has descended. I am His weapon, His sword, and His visard. Woe to the disobedient ! Death to cowards and unbelievers ! ”

It reminds us of the frenzied ravings of a Mahdi. Beside it the words of our own Cromwell—a Theocrat if ever there was one—seem quite drab : as at Dunbar : “ It was a crowning mercy. We never

charged but we scattered the enemy ; the Lord made them as stubble to our swords ! ” The old Hebrew religion and its offshoot Islam are the dynamos from which much fighting energy has been drawn. Among the Japanese the same spirit is, of course, predominant, but with them it is so much a matter of course that they do not trouble to elaborate it in declamations. Here is another extract from a less exalted person than the Heaven-sent Hohenzollern which nevertheless breathes the same spirit. A Field-Marshal (Bronsart von Schellendorf) writes :—

“ Do not let us forget the civilizing task which the decrees of Providence have assigned to us. Just as Prussia was destined to be the nucleus of Germany, so the regenerated Germany shall be the nucleus of a future Empire of the West. And in order that no one shall be left in doubt, we proclaim from henceforth that our continental nation has a right to the sea, not only to the North Sea, but to the Mediterranean and Atlantic. Hence we intend to absorb one after another all the provinces which neighbour on Prussia. We will successfully annex Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Northern Switzerland, and then Trieste and Venice ; finally Northern France from the Sambre to the Loire. This programme we fearlessly pronounce. It is not the work of a madman. The Empire we intend to found will be no Utopia. We have ready to our hands the means of founding it and no coalition in the world can stop us.”

Talk of Predestination!

But the religious fervour of the Germans differs from that of the Turks in this, that whereas the Moslems are inspired by the idea of a One God who is their actual leader, though heavenly, the Germans are inspired, if they can be inspired by any such idea, by the idea they have gathered from Darwin's

"Origin of Species" and Herbert Spencer's "Natural Selection," the idea summed up in Tennyson's line—

Nature red in tooth and claw,

which merely identifies man with the brutes.

The Germans claim to be inspired by the frigid forces of evolution; they regard themselves as the chosen people through whose virile destructiveness the higher ranges of civilization will be conquered for mankind. I should imagine that none of their present-day philosophers would allow that evolution could be in the direction indicated by Shakespeare's line—

The quality of mercy is not strained.

They are quite blind to the fact that the English pioneers of evolution had been alive to the dangers of this false analogy, and that Huxley had said most emphatically that "any one who used the argument of Nature against the ideal of justice and of equal law was as senseless as a gardener who should fight on the side of ill weeds merely because they grew apace," to quote from Mr. G. K. Chesterton's "Victorian Literature." But to this wise warning against unscientific argument by analogy the Prussian leaders were blind. To Prussia mercy was a weakness, justice an ideal for the feeble. Sparta, she remembered, kept her standard of manhood and through that—behind her living walls of human muscle—she preserved her national existence only by a merciless exposure and killing out of her own weaklings; and Prussia, the modern Sparta, surrounded, in her own opinion, with an equally menacing mass of hostile peoples, can afford mercy and the other degenerate virtues of the religion of Love as little as could Sparta herself. Circumstances produce character, and if we do not like the way Germany is developing we

should not blame the Germans but blame rather the forces which are moulding them. That is the German attitude as I understand it. The Germans are the chosen people of the ruthless deity they call Evolution, just as the Jews are the Chosen People of Jehovah, the jealous God, the Turks of Allah, the bloodthirsty. And they fight with the same blind indifference to the useless and avoidable damage they do as the Turks showed when they burnt the library at Alexandria. This is the real test of barbarism: the lack of proportion of means to end, the wanton and stupid doing of damage for its own sake.

We must not be any more surprised at the German laudation of war and its virtues than we are at the Spartan. Modern Evolution may have given the Germans another vocabulary, but the ideas are the same among both races. To both war is the father of all, and by war they both mean fighting to win by any means, simply because they cannot afford to lose, since defeat means annihilation at the hands of outraged enemies. Virtues which are not useful in war are not virtues, and thus in both cases we get a stronger or weaker tendency (for no merely human being has the dreadful courage of all his convictions) towards theft, callous slaughter, and brutality as an asset of the gladiator or professional bruiser; and lack of chivalry. Sons of the dragon's teeth that they are (or persuade themselves into being), the fight is the thing in itself and quite apart from the result. "We'll win first and then make up our mind what use we shall make of our victory," is their attitude. Alike, too, in the baleful effects of a brutalizing specialization both Germans and Spartans showed a lack of intelligence and inability to grasp the point of view of others or to allow for motives different from their own, a wrong estimate of the effect of their terror-striking methods, an intellectual activity which seldom

risers above the level of cunning where even the largest and gravest questions of war are concerned and not merely its field-fighting details—all of which go far to neutralize the effectiveness of their actual fighting. It is no less astonishing to read of the Spartans refusing to fight because the day was unlucky or their path had been crossed than it is to discover how Germany guessed wrong again and again in her preliminary moves, and even during the progress of the war itself. For instance, England was bound to be neutral. Because Germany knows no method of rule beside that of terror—making Polish children say their prayers in German, putting Brussels on to German time, forcing German names on to Belgian babies, making the people of Amiens salute common German soldiers—therefore England also can only terrorize her subjects (the Germans could not imagine a conqueror befriending and assimilating the conquered in the great old Roman way); and, therefore, in consequence of her terrorism, once England is engaged in war she will be faced with rebellion in Ireland, India, the Cape, everywhere, while her colonies will be glad of the chance to cut the painter and slip away from the tyranny of the *Mother Country*! Therefore England dare not risk war.

The mailed fist has also spoiled Germany's touch for the delicate strings of diplomacy, and thus her barbarous coarseness has bungled her business so badly that it has brought all her enemies about her head at once instead of in single file, to be killed like geese one at a time as they should have been.

Again, she thought that terror and wanton slaughter, the firing of libraries, the shelling of cathedrals and the dropping of bombs on open towns, would frighten the civil populations, and they in their turn would frighten their Governments into submission—as bad a guess as that the British soldiers would



be scared out of their wits by monstrous stink-pot shells, to which our men merely gave contemptuous nicknames, or that the British Army could be safely ignored after two weeks of rearguard fighting in which they had already established a "personal ascendancy" over the enemy. No; their simple hypothesis of evolution towards brutality has not worked. It is not broad-based enough to take in the whole of the facts of human nature. It is a following out of a single idea with a pedantry which would be almost pathetic if it were not so atrocious, and so the Government are reduced to continual lying and concealment to keep their own people in good heart about the war, apparently. Their belief in might has raised even mightier forces in defence of right and therefore stands condemned on its own showing. In short, the calculated brutality of German warfare is defeating its own ends since it is strengthening opposition. The Germans, in fact, know too little of human nature in general to be an Imperial people. Yet this philosophy, preached in universities and taught in schools, where children are encouraged, for instance, to compare war with a thunderstorm, however lacking it must ultimately prove itself to be even as a permanent basis for fighting, still less for statecraft, has, nevertheless, sunk deeply into the German mind.

The Kaiser can say to his men, when going against the Boxers in China: "Whosoever falls into your hands is forfeit to you, just as a thousand years ago the Huns under King Attila made a name for themselves which is still mighty in tradition"—and in nothing else, for, on the death of our old friend of the Dark Ages, the well-known scourge of God, the Huns vanished without leaving any trace except a wake of destruction. And Busch says that in 1870 Bismarck said to a general who reported a large capture of French soldiers: "That does not please me. What are we to come to at last with them all?"

Why do they take so many prisoners? " From utterances such as these the transition to Nietzsche's "Beyond Good and Evil" is not difficult. It is a creed which, terrible though it may seem, is really responsible for the present "*Germania contra mundum*." This war is a people's war; the German Socialists support it as we expected they would. It is no one-man-made war; although in events of this magnitude the man—especially when he has the personal traits of Kaiser Wilhelm II—is as important a factor as the hour.

It is easy to say that Nietzsche, Treitschke, Bernhardi, and the rest made the war, but it is at least arguable that these are only the mouthpieces of a still deeper but otherwise inarticulate race feeling, and that the thwarted desires and aspirations of a great people have expressed themselves in the half-insane writings of those thinkers who were most responsive to the national current. Be that as it may, the madness which actually showed itself in Nietzsche has reinfected the German people, and we are now in the presence of a very difficult problem—how to deal with a war-maddened race, a race which believes that war is not only the rough shield of the gentler civic virtues, but that these virtues themselves should be as hard as their warlike sheath. All I can suggest is that no amount of sympathy, no amount of understanding would prevent the owner of a favourite dog which had suddenly gone mad from destroying it, or, if a cure short of destruction were possible, from taking the necessary steps, however drastic. The only difference that sympathy and a knowledge of the cause of the disease would make to the owner would be to fill him with pity for his former companion; they would not weaken his determination or unnerve his arm. The more he loved his dog, the more he remembered of his earlier steadfastness, the steadier would be his aim when he shot him. Half-measures are

impossible, excitement or flurry might cause bungling, infection with the sufferer's madness would mean ruin for all. As Mr. Hilaire Belloc said in a lecture at Sheffield, "The only possible solution is the entire destruction of the German military machine and ideal of government."

It is useless to argue with madmen, I know, yet nevertheless I cannot resist the temptation to make one point. If war is all that the Germans claim that it is, we and our Allies are doing Germany a good turn in giving her the opportunity of developing her warlike qualities at our expense. It takes two to make a quarrel; and instead of trying to prove that England and Russia are really responsible for the war, as the Germans are trying to do in the United States and elsewhere, the Germans should have the courage of their convictions and boldly claim the war as their own, as it undoubtedly is. They have been very bold in proclaiming their plans for aggression before the war; let them keep it up now that the actual fighting has begun. Let the Kaiser say in 1914 what the Empress Eugénie did not fear to say in 1870, "This is my war." They are welcome to the glory. All this preliminary shouting of theirs about what they mean to do seems to me a proof of their madness—their method of letting their neighbours know they were "not right"; but simply because their shouts were largely unintelligible and incredible to us, as madmen's shouts are apt to be, we ignored them until it was too late; and now we are engaged in a supreme effort to put our neighbour in a strait-jacket, for this is a better metaphor than the pistolling of a mad dog. The Germans loudly and honestly proclaimed their intentions and their ideals. It is not their fault if we are shocked and grieved when they proceed to act upon them. It is, on the contrary, largely our own for having always assumed that men and nations never act on their theories and seldom

mean what they say. We know as little of the real Germany as Germany knows of the real England. Yet the story of Zabern was well known in England, only England, with the levity which comes from safety, closed her eyes to its significance.

The strength of the stimulus which Germany administers to her soldiers is to be explained in another way, I think, besides the fanatical fury of the war spirit. The German has always seemed to me to be soft metal, easily moulded, easily led. The Germans easily lose their sense of nationality, especially when they emigrate; the English, on the other hand, tend to impress others with their own characteristics. The Germans are digestible, the English are digesters, like the Romans. Despite the width of their knowledge and the extent of their education, the Germans seem lacking in self-reliance; and thus we find that Bernhardt is always preaching the need of individuality and initiative in both the Army and the school. A works manager told me that he once had a group of workmen over from Germany for a particular piece of work, and all these men maintained that they understood no English till their foreman came up and told them exactly what they had to do. Then they all felt free to talk—in English for the most part—without running any risk of making mistakes. An Englishman, on the other hand, sent abroad probably has a look at his job and is in at it without a word to or from anybody before the foreigners have satisfied their curiosity concerning him.

Now I believe that in magnetism soft iron can be made into a very powerful magnet so long as the current of electricity continues to pass round it; as soon as the current is cut off the magnetic condition also disappears, whereas harder iron and steel retain their magnetic condition permanently under ordinary circumstances. I often wonder whether the

iron crosses which the Kaiser sends out by the barrow-load to stimulate his troops are made of hard or soft iron—at any rate, they are not steel. So it seems to me it is with the Germans. Their soft, gentle, malleable natures are a real danger to Europe, since they render the Germans admirable material for the drill-sergeant to mould into shape, and then for the officer caste—the dynamo of the German Government as well as of the Army—to stimulate to hectic and practically to automatic and subconscious activity, but hardly the resistless rush of a really martial people. “Expand or explode” is a motto only for an explosive people, not of a people in “iron-bound ranks from which all that was individual was sternly excluded in favour of a massed effect,” as Walter Bloem says in his story, “The Iron Year.” They have already contrasted their stiffness with the disciplined freedom and individuality of the British infantry, whose use of the rifle—the freeman’s weapon—seems to them to resemble the firing of a machine-gun, and whose taking of cover seems a sort of miracle. A maddened, brutalized, and repressed soldiery, bullied during drill and driven into action by methods the German officers know best, are only too likely, when left to themselves, to practise on others the brutalities they have suffered at the hands of their officers ; their own frayed and jagged nerves react and produce atrocities as it were by reflex action. The sugar of their nature has been fermented into alcohol. Nor do the rulers object to this brutality on occasion. In principle they approve it ; and in ordinary life they practise it, as witness the fierce stodginess of the students’ *mensurs* or duels, and the number of duelling officers one sees shut up in a place like Ehrenbreitstein. War is no prize-fight, we all know, as all who have watched French or German soldiers drilling or marching realize. There are no rounds in the supreme international

contest, no umpires to call "time," and if you are out for victory, which shall be so complete as to make criticism of your methods by outsiders futile, or else for defeat, which means annihilation, after which, being dead, you care nothing for anybody's opinion, you may be strongly tempted to adopt any measures that seem to serve your purpose for the moment.

Nevertheless, there are certain conventions which have grown up as regards the carrying on of the struggle—the public law of Europe—and although any combatant is at liberty to repudiate these conventions if he so wishes, he repudiates them under this risk: that he himself is liable to reprisals, and should he be worsted his fate may be rendered hard in proportion to the conventions he has ignored—a better phrase perhaps than "the laws he has broken"—for there are, strictly speaking, no such things as international laws because there is no international body to enforce them.

Of course we have heard that "necessity knows no law," and also that "nothing succeeds like success." Then, too, there is that pithy old couplet which runs thus :—

Treason ne'er thrives, and that for just this reason :  
When it succeeds then none dare call it treason.

Germany may argue that the necessity she was under to finish off France at lightning speed in order that she might then get round and tackle Russia is her justification for her attempt to buy English neutrality at the price of her shame, for her invasion of neutral Belgium, for her cruelties, atrocities, and vandalisms in both the countries she has invaded. She may argue that Brussels yielded because of the awful example of Louvain, just as Cromwell might have argued that Drogheda and Wexford shortened

the horrors of the Irish War and left him free to deal with the Scots, and that it is all very well for England, who, having all she needs and sitting comfortably behind her "mitigated sea"—as William Watson calls it—and the navies it carries, can afford to wage war generously, to hold up her hands in horror at what Germany has done; but is England absolutely certain that, faced with similar necessities, she would refrain from similar courses? Did she not carry off the fleet of neutral Denmark in 1807—Bernhardi points out—to prevent it from falling into the hands of Napoleon? Does England really prefer the dragging methods of Mountjoy to the sharp methods of the Protector? Are Drogheda and Wexford really worse than the dead in the Irish ditches, their mouths green with the nettles that had been their only food after Mountjoy had passed?

Now such arguments are not easy to controvert. There is but one effective reply to them, and it is this: Since Germany appeals to force, she must abide by the arbitrament of force; if she points to success as justifying all that she has done, we must obviously see to it that she does *not* succeed ultimately and finally. For German success means the throwing down of all the conventions or universal agreements which we call civilization and the reversion of human society to the ethics of the tiger and the ape. Thus it appears to me that a resistance to German aggression based on knowledge of German history and ideals is so much sounder and more reliable and will go so much farther than a resistance based merely on the excitement of recruiting meetings and atrocity stories in the newspapers—an excitement which is by no means identical with the real passion that leads to victory. Treitschke wrote thus of Frederick the Great: "Frederick the Great was all his life charged with treachery because

no treaty or alliance could ever induce him to renounce the right of self-determination." To Frederick, that is to say, treaties were like piecrust—made to be broken. We must force ourselves to realize that terror and brutality are the weapons of a stupid people, too unintelligent or too panic-stricken—or too hectoring—to adopt the methods which built up the Roman and the British Empires. Whereas Edward I asked the Welsh to accept a prince who could not speak a word of English, the German asks the foreign traveller to write his name and address on the hotel police-form in German characters—in its way as barbarous, because as senseless and unnecessary, as the shelling of Reims Cathedral or the burning of the Louvain Library.

All the excessive emphasis of which Germany has been guilty of late may, it is true, be only a sort of loud whistling to keep her courage up; but the whistling has grown so loud and so distracting of late—it has drowned so many still, small voices and prevented Germany herself from hearing so many truths that she could not afford to miss—that it is high time we called "Silence!" in a voice that even the desperate whistler herself shall hear. For a victorious Germany means the rule of stupidity, the rule of people who can think only of snatching what they want and living by word of command, the rule of a people who know no other method but that of force and terror. The French Reign of Terror was a thundercloud charged with blessings for mankind. The German reign of terror with which we are threatened would be a desert which the jack-booted tyrant of Brandenburg would call Peace.



### III

## CULTURE

HAVING seen how Germany grew and the sources from which she draws her war spirit, we have now to consider briefly whether the German claim that the world conquest she is after will result in the spread of a superior civilization of German origin will bear examination. If it will, then perhaps Germany has justified her aggression, after all ; if it will not, then nothing is left of the German case.

Now nobody can travel through Germany and remain blind to the importance which the Germans attach to many matters about which we in England are neglectful and indifferent ; not matters like National Insurance, in which we have been apt to copy the Germans too slavishly—one good result of the war will be that it will put a stop, I hope, to this uncritical borrowing from Germany—but matters to which I have already alluded incidentally when I was speaking of the admirable way in which Germany avoided the evils of our own industrial system and preserved the mediæval character of so many of her ancient cities. In Germany continuity with the past has been jealously preserved. In England it has been ignorantly destroyed by short-sighted, practical men in a hurry to get rich—even at the expense of national well-being. In Germany, individual enterprise has been regulated in the

interests of the State. In England it has been let loose to work its own will regardless of existing institutions ; our nineteenth-century utilitarianism was far more destructive than even the German guns at Reims.

All that comes from keeping in touch with one's own past line of development, all that comes from living in a city with the unbroken traditions of Nüremburg or Frankfort—cities which were in earlier days self-governing and self-contained city republics embedded in the heart of Germany—is the daily lot of the modern German.

And his education enables him to appreciate it. Even the technical training is glorified and enriched with history. Thus the barber apprentices of Munich are taught in the continuation schools not only how to strop and lather, how to keep the brushes and bowls clean, how to tell good material from bad—and we realize how important all this is when we think of the evils which an ill-kept barber's shop may so easily spread throughout the community—but they are also told the meaning of the bleeding-dish which hangs as a sign before their doors ; how it proves that in the days when bleeding was regarded as a cure-all method they were in reality one branch of the profession which in its other branch has developed into the surgeons, that barbers are really barber-surgeons and that shaving is really a surgical operation. Then, again, the older apprentice is taught the various styles of historic hairdressing and the various wigs of different periods. Thus he becomes an artist and a man of science as well as a tradesman, and his talk with his customers is not necessarily confined to prize-fights and horse-races.

As another instance of dignifying the present by linking it with the traditions and customs of the past I will describe a scene I once witnessed in

Heidelberg. Along its main street came a procession of open carriages, each with three men in it. All were dressed in the semi-military costume of the German Student Corps: white buckskin breeches, topboots, and laced coats. Two bore the duelling-swords of the Corps and the third its banner. Following the procession, I found that it was making for the cemetery, and when I got there I came upon a most imposing sight. A professor was about to be buried, and the whole of the avenue was lined with these Corps officers, with their student members behind them. After the coffin had been lowered each trio advanced to the graveside, the two swordbearers crossed their swords over the hollow while the flagbearer dipped his flag thrice over the crossed swords into the grave. Then all three saluted the mourners and gave place to the officers of the next Corps. Thus once again was forced upon me a revision of my ideas on German institutions; for although the faces of the Corps officers bore many a duelling scar and those of others bore traces of the drinking side of Corps life—a side which the Kaiser recently discountenanced in characteristic manner by giving selected toppers a good talking-to himself—yet the Corps on this occasion presented as effective a ceremony as I have ever seen.

I have suggested that education plays a very much greater part in Germany than it does with us. The Germans believe in education; we don't; and education brings rewards in Germany which it never brings in England. For instance, a boy who has reached a certain standard escapes half his military service, and consequently school progress is a matter of almost painful interest not only to the boy himself but also to his whole family. Indeed, the pressure proves every year too much for hundreds of German schoolboys, and year by year the number of school-

boy suicides is rising in consequence. The girls are given an equally thorough domestic training. English girls brought face to face with the continuous hard work of a German household have, as a rule, the shock of their lives. The carrying of heavy market-baskets, the bringing home of fir-cones in bags, pockets, and even umbrellas from country walks to feed the stove and save the fuel, the economy and industry of it all are almost appalling to them. The success also of technical education in Germany is unquestioned, of course ; but it is on another aspect of education—an aspect unthought of in England—that I wish to dwell. We in England think of education as an affair of little children—with perhaps continued training for a small number of favoured adolescents. But by the time that people reach their twenties we concern ourselves no more with their education—although, I am glad to say, they are showing every year through Adult Schools, the Workers' Educational Association, and some sides of the Evening Schools an ever-increasing determination to educate themselves.

Now what does Germany do for the adults? She does not make the mistake we might expect her to make : order them off to the schoolroom after work in the evening, whether they wish it or no. She does not do that ; but she does this : she educates them through their recreations. Now with us in England amusement is a matter of business ; public entertainments are run for profit : the public is given what the managers think it wants ; in Germany, and all over the Continent as a matter of fact, the theatre is a public institution : not every theatre, but one theatre at least in each big town. The Corporation loses hundreds, probably thousands, of pounds a year upon the State theatre, and is content to lose—as also upon State opera and music—for the same reason that we are willing to lose

upon our schools and libraries, to support which we levy local rates : because the theatre is as truly educational as the school and the library—and perhaps even more effective since it presents education in the guise of recreation. The State makes it its business to supply ideas—or rather to open up the great sources of ideas—for the benefit of the adults ; and much of the alertness of the German manufacturer and the open-mindedness of the German workman is due doubtless to the fact that they have kept their minds in training by exercising them on the ideas rendered available by the public support of drama, literature, and art ; whereas the English manufacturer has only his golf and his motor-car to occupy his leisure—with perhaps an occasional musical comedy or third-rate novel ; while the British workman has to find what mental sustenance he can in football, fishing, boxing, and racing as conveyed to him chiefly in the columns of the half-penny Press, with perhaps “ The Will of Kaiser Bill ” by way of comic relief. The consequence is that both masters and men tend to “ wither at the top ” and to lose the brain-power required for remoulding their methods in face of intelligent German competition.

The State fostering of thought and intelligence under the form of recreation thus probably pays for itself many times over in the increased economic efficiency of the workers. But in another respect also the State is the gainer from the State theatre. We have heard a great deal of late about caste in Germany—and the military caste is of course a great fact, perhaps the greatest fact, in Germany to-day. But the German theatre is far less caste-ridden than is our own. The most striking part of the German theatre is the foyer or large entrance-hall, with its staircases, buffets, and corridors. Now during the *entr’actes* at a German theatre the whole

house leaves its seats and troops down or out, as the case may be, to the foyer and its bars. Thus is secured a real mingling of the classes, a real fusion of social grades in the common interest in art, which we in England have never yet been able to achieve. In contrast with a corresponding German audience the audience in a provincial English theatre is often lamentably deficient in deportment. Not only do people in pit and gallery often explain to each other what is going on behind the footlights—somewhat after the manner of a Greek chorus, to the distraction of those within earshot—but if a play contains any daring situations or local touches, as, e.g., in “Hindle Wakes,” the audience shrieks so loudly with delight that the “packers-up” in the pit have to shout “Order, order!” at frequent intervals.

The German theatre is also free from those twin nuisances and hindrances to British drama, the actor-manager and the long run. Each German theatre has its company and its repertoire of plays, which is continually increased by additions from among the best modern productions. Thus the German theatre-goer has the chance of getting to know a far larger number of great plays and poems than has the English theatre-goer, even though he live in London. The same is true of German music.

But perhaps the most remarkable fact about the German theatre is the attention it pays to foreign drama, and English in particular. The Germans claim that Shakespeare is really a German, born by accident on the wrong side of the North Sea; and if we are to judge by the relative treatment he has received in Germany and in his native land, till recently at any rate, the Germans have a good case.

It is difficult to go into a German town without seeing a Shakespeare play advertised: more

Shakespeare plays are performed in Germany than in England, where Mr. William Poel—whose work has received but scanty public recognition—holds the record; the number of actual performances is many times greater. In September, 1914, "Henry V" was actually played as a patriotic drama at Berlin. Can we imagine Schiller's "Wallenstein" at His Majesty's in the same autumn? And they are performed more seriously—with a greater regard, I mean, to the words and spirit of Shakespeare himself. When, for instance, a popular London actor-manager produced "King John" he actually included a tableau of King John signing the Magna Charta simply because the fact is mentioned in Little Arthur's History of England and others. The fact that Shakespeare would have regarded Magna Charta as a piece of presumption on the part of the barons had no deterrent effect on him. We are fortunate, indeed, that he did not set out to put his Magna Charta scene in words and thus add to Shakespeare to satisfy a British weakness. In "The Tempest" he played with a fire-hose on a solidly built ship swung on rockers. But it was only when he took six plays to Berlin at the invitation of the Kaiser that the real contrast between the German and the English view of Shakespeare became evident. This particular actor-manager likes his plays sumptuous. I remember a review of his "Henry VIII" which was written simply in the form of a catalogue—item, one palace; item, one Cardinal's robe; and so forth—and that in an English critical weekly. Well, when he took his plays to Berlin the elaboration of his mountings quite overcame the Berlin scene-shifters, and it is said that during the *entr'actes*, while the audience were criticizing his performance in the foyer, he himself was frantically struggling with the next set of scenery. The views of the German critics were at

first strongly expressed ; doubtless they were disappointed at not seeing him at his real work behind the curtain ; but later they became more tolerant—possibly at a hint from some august person who was at that time anxious for a good understanding with England.

I think that the Germans may claim, then, that they have given much thought to the drama and have reaped their reward. The same is equally true of music, in which the German genius expresses itself most happily and naturally. But German music is so great that it needs no more than a passing mention. All that I will say is that I was delighted when the Queen's Hall Orchestra restored Wagner to its programme after the war had been in progress a week or two and when the proprietors had realized that no riot would result.

In the plastic arts, so far as I who know little of them can judge, the same careful, conscientious, and critical attitude—of a marshalled and disciplined kind—on the part of the general public is observable.

When first I knew the Basilica of Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) it was in the rough, just as Charlemagne had left it. When I saw it last time I was surprised to see that the work had been finished—after an interval of eleven hundred years. The whole of the interior was covered with mosaics, as they are gradually covering the interior of the new Roman Catholic Cathedral at Westminster. When I reached home I spoke of what I had seen to a friend. He was much interested and showed me several booklets, costing one or two marks each, illustrated with photographs. These books were the pamphlets that the two parties, for and against the mosaics, had been firing into each other ; and they had scoured Egypt, Syria, and the Balkans for their ammunition : their photos of mosaics and decorations from churches throughout the Near East.



A similar work of decoration was recently undertaken in London. Sir W. B. Richmond covered several hundred square yards of St. Paul's Cathedral with mosaics and nobody troubled to criticize him—perhaps his work is above criticism ; but when the decorators began to stencil patterns in red paint on the stonework public opinion was at last moved to protest and the paint had to be scrubbed off again, but if one knows where to look one may still see its faint traces.

In other restorations—for instance, at Heidelberg, at the Roman camp near Homburg, the Saalburg, and at the Rhine Castle the Marksburg—the same anxiety to be correct is observable ; but frequently the effect, though the result of absolutely sound and honest and painstaking work, is unfortunate. The restored portion of the Heidelberg Castle in particular seems to me to spoil the general effect completely. It looks as though a hotel had been built in the midst of the ruins and decorated throughout with gaudy frescoes. Among the Germans themselves, however, I must admit that the most popular sight at Heidelberg seems to be the Great Tun, together with the fox's brush that bobs out at you unexpectedly in the same room—the trick of some jester of the Elector-Palatine's Court. In the Saalburg, similarly, I went up to what I took from a distance to be a row of machine-guns. So they were ; they were working models of ancient Roman catapults of one sort and another. I remember also the smooth working of the Marksburg drawbridge.

This same careful, reverent spirit has in the world of science and criticism given German scholars the lead in all that can be accomplished by diligence and thoroughness ; while the fine effectiveness of the German educational system has provided the leaders in every branch of science, art, literature, industry, and commerce with a supply of trained

subordinates such as no other country—least of all England—can show. I have known a German girl steadily prepare herself for a concert by playing through the compositions to be performed, practically making her own analytical programme for herself. The whole land is, moreover, freer than we are from the restrictions and checks on private conduct which we inherit from Puritanism but which we attribute to Mrs. Grundy.

All this is to the good, and it goes a very long way, but not all the way. The machinery, the trained intelligence, the disciplined appreciation are there in admirable order. Culture, like all else German, has been organized. But has the body been inspired—made to live? In music and in philosophy? Yes. But in other directions? The answer must be found in this fact, that ever since a national life began to stir in Germany and the old local arts and crafts, like those practised so exquisitely in Nüremburg and other cities throughout the Middle Ages, were superseded by efforts on a larger scale, Germany has been a borrower rather than an originator. Her genius to-day lies rather in arranging the great works of the past in excellent order—as we may see in the National Museums in Nüremburg and Munich—than in producing the great works themselves for future ages to arrange and admire.

At the beginning of her career as a kingdom in the early seventeen hundreds, Prussia—and with Prussia most of Germany as well—was bound to the chariot-wheels of French convention in the Arts ; and when Lessing in his great work on behalf of the Hamburg Theatre later in the same century cut these bonds he freed German art and literature from France—to what end? To deliver them over to the tyranny of England. When he said that if Shakespeare did not conform to the rules of Louis XIV's Court poets, so much the worse for the rules ; when he gave one

of his plays the very English title of "Miss Sarah Simpson" (it reminds one slightly of "Clarissa Harlow") he was simply revealing the nakedness of his native land. The *Sturm und Drang* period which succeeded him—and disgusted him—was merely Shakespeare caricatured; and Schiller turned to France for his exquisitely sympathetic *Maid of Orleans*, to Scotland for his *Marie Stuart*, to Switzerland for his *William Tell*. "*Wallenstein*" is of course German enough in theme, as is also Goethe's early "*Götz von Berlichingen*," but both these are dramas of a divided Germany—of a Germany plunged into religious and agrarian civil war. Goethe's "*Faust*" is also quite German, but really because its interests and speculations, though German in form and setting, are world-wide in their appeal, and universality was the character of German thought in the eighteenth century. Goethe was a "good European" first—the phrase is Nietzsche's—a German only in the second place, and the German character of his writing adds only to its attractiveness; it in nowise lessens the universality of its appeal. When the Weimar folk wished to do him peculiar honour on the jubilee of his coming among them, they performed his classic "*Iphigenia*" at the theatre of which he was director and for which he had done so much work that will live.

This power of appreciating and adapting the work of others is seen in other spheres as well. I remember seeing in Manchester some of the plays which Gordon Craig designed for his mother, Ellen Terry, and I well remember the comments of the pittites round about me. They were pitying Ellen Terry, pitying her because she had, as they said, "come to this" after all the glorious upholstery of her partnership with Irving. To the British play-goers Craig's severity seemed merely thin and cheap; they had no conception of the beauty of sheer sim-

plicity and absolute necessity—the beauty, for instance, of a purely utilitarian object like the human body ; so he went abroad and found a welcome in—Moscow ! where his “ Hamlet ” was rehearsed for a whole year before it was offered to the public by the Art Theatre Company. From Moscow his influence spread to Germany, where it woke a sympathetic chord in the work of Max Reinhardt, the director of the Deutsches Theatre in Berlin. Gradually Reinhardt began to feel his way into England, or, to be more exact, London (the two are not synonymous), and at last he burst upon us and captivated us with “ The Miracle ” at Olympia. Thus we were allowed to come in at the tail of a movement which we could have led, since we had the first offer, but lacked the widespread general taste which enabled even the Muscovites to see the value and importance of Craig’s work.

This power of development and adaptation is to be seen also in the capture of the dye trade. The English, indeed, originated the processes, but the Germans made them commercial successes ; and our punishment is that to-day, I understand, the supply of khaki has given out through the exhaustion of the stock of German dyes of the right colour. On the unworthy side these same powers are devoted to the production of cheap imitations of sound English goods and the forging of English trade-marks to deceive customers as to their real origin and nature. But this is only the corruption of the best which becomes the worst.

We can then, I think, freely acknowledge that there is a German culture, and that it reached its height in little places like Weimar, about which Thackeray wrote so appreciatively. But the gentleness and peace which so attracted him are hardly the source of such creative energy as shall overwhelm the world with a new Renaissance. The same quali-

ties, in short, which make the German a docile soldier make him also a steady believer in culture : the receptivity and submission to authority which we have already noted in other connections. It is only when this amiable simplicity is galvanized by the crude energy of a newly fledged national enthusiasm that it commits atrocities on the artistic side comparable only to the atrocities of the invading armies which burn Louvain and bombard Reims. I have already referred to the Leipsic monument. That grotesque mass is not to be mentioned beside the serene beauty of Goethe's house in the Place at Weimar as I saw it a few years back, with all the poet's engravings and statues, his books and apparatus, even the bed on which he died, crying for "more light," just as he had left them. And yet the two are within a short hour's run of each other. A little place like Weimar is in many ways far more truly the capital of Germany than the noisy and feverish Berlin, which seems so to intoxicate the Kaiser ; and it is the art which emanates from the Imperialism of the capital which is so bad—the Sieges Allee statues and so on. Even music seems to have caught the infection, and we recognize once more the familiar note of brutal realism in the scratching music of Electra's unearthing of the Axe in Strauss' opera—originality overstraining itself and becoming mere ugliness. And again, South Germany—sunny and art-loving Munich even—tolerates a flat-footed ferocity in some of the *Jugend* cartoons—to say nothing of its famous Hate Song against England—which is the very reverse of the Bavarian character.

Now it is this Grenadier become artist—we have already seen him disguised as a schoolmaster—that the real lovers of German culture detest and fear. Even Nietzsche, whose influence is usually regarded as all on the side of hardness and brutality, condemned the newer growth which miscalled itself

culture. He objected to the sort of stuff which Treitschke gave forth on the death of the Emperor Frederick :—

“The time must one day come when the peoples shall feel that the battles of the Emperor William I not only created a Fatherland for the Germans but also bestowed upon the community of the nations a juster and more reasonable order. Then will be fulfilled what once Emmanuel Geibel sang to the grey-haired victor : ‘And the world will one day find healing at the touch of the German character.’ ”

Of Treitschke himself Nietzsche said that he had “completely lost sight of the notion of culture,” while of German culture—new style—he said : “I look down on German culture with undisguised contempt. Without either sense or substance or goal, it is simply public opinion. There could be no more dangerous misunderstanding than to suppose that Germany’s success at arms proved anything in favour of German culture—and still less the triumph of that culture over France.” After all, then, Versailles was greater than the Emperor who was crowned there in 1870. Heine—whose house in Craven Street, London, may still be seen—had even stronger feelings about the Junkerism which was masquerading as German culture even in his day. In “Deutschland” he gives an account of his return to Germany after thirteen years’ absence :—

At Aachen on the posthouse shield  
I saw the bird again  
That I so hate ! It glared on me  
With poisonous disdain.

Thou loathly fowl ! if ever thou  
Into my hands shouldst fall,  
I’ll pluck thy feathers and hack off  
Thy talons, one and all.

I'll nail thee to a lofty pole,  
Thou'lt make a target fine ;  
And to a shooting match I'll call  
The bowmen of the Rhine.

Still more terrible, because so much more prophetic, is the passage in which Heine says that German culture would inevitably draw to an end by the bombardment of Christian cathedrals. And last of all I would call attention to a passage from Schiller—the writer of the “Maid of Orleans” who crowned Charles VII in Reims—in which he says : “The fall of the Empire does not mean the fall of German greatness.” Of course not. The rise of the present Empire marked the decline of German greatness in the Arts ; its fall may be the first step towards a happier and more rational development of German culture. A certain strain of military sternness is strengthening to a civilization, but a State which is all backbone is, by hypothesis, without either heart or head.

Throughout this subject of German culture I have been careful to distinguish between the real and the spurious, between the culture which appealed to Carlyle and Thackeray and that which appealed to Treitschke, who seemed to think, with so many other Germans, that genius could be organized and regimented and forced by machinery into existence—thereby suggesting that he and they have no real conception of its nature, and have therefore no real message to the world either in the arts or in government.

Leaving German State art, then, as merely a manifestation of German materialism and Imperialism, it yet seems to me that the enemy has a good deal to teach us in the matter of fostering our national art and literature. And we should do well to ponder what he has to teach, because when the time for

settlement comes the forces which will tell will be, not only the armed forces of the various States but also the force of ideas and enlightenment which each of the victors can put into the field. Have we begun to mobilize these forces yet? Have we begun to think seriously and effectively about the problems the war is opening up both at home and abroad—or, indeed, about any problems? Have we realized that after the war we shall need brains similar to those which reorganized Prussia in the early nineteenth century, and that the one-step which is enough for the ordinary Englishman must soon become a two-step, if not a regular hop, skip, and jump, however disturbing it may be to our liver and our dignity? Have we begun to toughen our mental fibre by hard thinking and hard reading, as Kitchener's Armies are toughening their muscles by Swedish—not British—gymnastics? Are we sure that our security behind an invincible Navy has not produced a slackness and a frivolity of mind, an unwillingness to tackle problems which need concentrated thinking or which raise terrible imaginings; or to read, not skim, books which—like Bernhardt's "Germany and the Next War," with its motto from Nietzsche, "War and courage have done more great things than love of the neighbour"—are not only a bit stiff but also more than a little shocking to our pet ethics and favourite prepossessions; or to combat conclusions such as these: "What is more harmful than any vice? Practical sympathy with the botched and weak—Christianity," "Christian altruism is the mob egoism of the weak"?

If we have learned to criticize ourselves on these lines and to check the faults which our self-criticism reveals, then this war will not have been fought in vain. We must oppose the all-round self-discipline of a free people to the all-round organization of regimented Germany.



## SECOND ESSAY

### *FRANCE: THE PIONEER OF CIVILIZATION*

AT the end of my last essay I quoted a passage from Nietzsche, in which he said that the success of German arms proved nothing in favour of German culture, and still less the triumph of that culture over France.

I propose now to take this as the text of the present section of my subject.

In going as fully into German history as we have done, we have cleared most of the historical facts we need for our purpose out of the way. All these facts have other facets, of course, each facet turned towards a different State and forming part of that State's history ; but, for the most part, these facets are only the converse of the facets we have already seen from the point of view of German history, and therefore require nothing more than an incidental notice from us.

I shall not, then, concern myself so fully with French history as I did with German history, because to do so would be simply waste of time in repetition. There is, moreover, a more vital point of view from which to tell the French story. But before I begin it, I do not wish to suggest that because I propose to touch but lightly on French history the history of France is of less importance than that of Germany. Far otherwise. The history of Europe is, indeed, best treated as pivoting on that of France. Again

and again France has been the outstanding fact in European history ; again and again has she emerged from a period of internal difficulty to compel once more the attention and admiration of Europe and direct her destinies. But it so happens that the real cause of the present war is the growth and situation of Germany, and therefore the history we require had to be treated mainly from the point of view of German growth. I only wish it were unavoidable for me to tell the story of the growth of France ; of her inheritance through Gaul of all that Rome had left to the world ; of her central position ; of her work in reviving, north of the Alps, all that the Mediterranean had contributed to the well-being of mankind, and in adding still further to the glorious total.

It is all far more brilliant and varied than the steady tramp of the Prussians through the last two centuries, but, as I have already said, we must be content with such glances at it as we can obtain by reflection from the history of Germany and the other States—including our own—with which France came into contact from time to time.

If France has had her ups and downs during the nine centuries she has been a kingdom ; if she has been trampled down by Moors and English and Germans ; if, like Israel of old, she has repelled her foes under leaders who have appeared as providentially as the Hebrew Judges (leaders like Charles the Hammer, Joan of Arc, Henry of Navarre, Napoleon)—nevertheless, from another point of view her influence on Europe has been steady and continuous throughout her history. She has been the ever-flowing source of ideas and movements in Europe.

We have seen that the German Empire was formed in 1870 at the expense of France. Similarly we might say that the French kingdom was effectually

established at the expense of England. Throughout the Hundred Years War France was a prey to the English, whose archers at Crécy and Poitiers—the English have always excelled in shooting—gave our island forces a superiority and English rule in France a continuity neither had done enough to deserve. France was held under easily by England because she was divided, whereas England had been united centuries earlier by the wonderful work of our Norman-French and French kings—William I, Henry I, and Henry II. French provinces were in reality almost rival States under the nominal rule of the French King, even as the States of Germany were practically independent units under the Emperor.

But this period of division and consequent subjugation to the more united power of England passed away when Joan of Arc drove the English from Orleans and so broke their prestige. When in the fated cathedral of Reims, and clad in white, she stood by the side of the ungrateful Dauphin she had raised to the throne, we may well imagine her the fairy godmother whose magic had created a united and living France from the remnants of the warring provinces that had been snatched back from England. It was the son (Louis XI) of the King she had crowned who first ruled a really united France. He was a contemporary of our Henry VII, and we have already referred to him in connection with Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, "Quentin Durward," Villon, and Justin Huntley McCarthy's play "If I were King."

But French influence begins long before the consolidation of the French throne. Throughout the Middle Ages French ideas kept Europe busy and broke into the local particularism which was the great drawback of mediæval society. More than one monastic order of importance arose in France; the

Carthusians, the Cluniacs, the Cistercians all had their headquarters in some French monastery or other. St. Bernard, whose hymn—

Jesus, the very thought of Thee  
With sweetness fills my breast,

is still sung in our churches, was the greatest force of his time ; he ordered kings and rulers about as if they were nothing more than schoolboys ; he intervened with effect among the rival Popes of his day ; and his struggles with Abélard have not even yet been forgotten. His *Life*, by Morrison, published by Macmillan, is one of the very best books for those to read who wish to see what the Middle Ages were like and what influence this Frenchman wielded even in the days of our Norman kings.

One of St. Bernard's biggest efforts was the preaching of the Second Crusade. The First Crusade had also been preached, first of all at Clermont, on French soil, by Peter the Hermit, and, indeed, the whole of the crusading idea may be said with truth to be of French origin. I cannot of course dwell here on the results of these wonderful wars—the first and most effective Concert of Europe. Their influence in bringing European peoples together, breaking down barriers, opening up trade routes and establishing international highways, planting ideas and spreading knowledge, leading off barons to a consecrated death against the Moslems—this was St. Bernard's frank argument—and thus giving the subjects they left behind a chance of prospering and developing their own local self-government by the purchase of charters from needy crusaders ; the founding of the militant orders of the Templars and the Knights of St. John of Malta, the Hospitallers, who became our Red Cross Societies—all this and much more Europe owes to the French idea of the

Crusade. Nor is that all. Not every Crusade went eastward into the Holy Land. We have already seen crusading knights conquering Prussia for Brandenburg ; now we have to notice that Portugal takes its rise from the attacks of French Crusaders who established themselves on the Tagus mouth, and using this as a base, drove back the Moors of Spain far enough to found a Christian kingdom on the coast.

Another institution of vast importance to Europe which France can claim as her own is the University. Like the Crusades, the University was a unifying movement, a net spread all over Christendom to hold it together in the bonds of learning.

The Church had already bound Europe together in the bonds of religion, and the mediæval Universities, with their scholastic philosophers and theologians, their Latin—the language of learning which old Rome had bequeathed alike to her spiritual successor the Roman Church and to her intellectual heir the University—helped also to strengthen this bond. Whatever differences of speech and custom might sever one mediæval kingdom or duchy from another, the Churchman and the scholar were free to go wherever they wished, for everywhere they found a language and an organization to which they were accustomed. Europe was thus knit together by the scholars and Churchmen of the time. We find Alcuin from the Tyne teaching Charlemagne's Germans in the ninth century ; we find Theodore of St. Paul's city of Tarsus, in Asia Minor, settling a dispute between rival churches at Northumbrian Whitby as early as the seventh century ; we find French monks carrying the fiery cross throughout Europe and leading the cosmopolitan armies of the Crusades towards the tomb of Christ from the eleventh century onwards.

Now Paris was the earliest and most important University to the north of the Alps. From it many

other Universities were founded, while within its limits students of all races, grouped in "nations," were to be found. Oxford, I believe, claims a separate foundation, and perhaps an even earlier one ; while Cambridge says, somewhat shamefacedly, that she believes she was founded a few hundreds of years B.C. by one Cantaber, King of Spain ! But, for all that, Paris may be regarded as the chief centre of European Universities. Abélard and Héloïse, with St. Bernard, are certainly the chief names in the University world of the mediæval period, and I think we may fairly claim to add the benefits which the Universities have conferred on Europe to those which the Crusades have conferred and put the total down to the credit of France.

For yet one more glory Europe is indebted to France, and that glory is perhaps the greatest of all, since it is the triumph of the Middle Ages, the highest expression of our Christian civilization. It is nothing less than the Gothic cathedral. Now, when we come across the term Goth first it has associations similar to that of Vandal—Goths and Vandals alike were barbarians of the Dark Ages, yet nowadays the terms have very different connotations. Vandalism is still the term we apply to acts of wanton destruction, whereas Gothic has become a word to denote the highest achievement of Christian art. Perhaps a few words in explanation, then, of the word Gothic will not be out of place. I have nothing to say about vandalism ; the ruins of Louvain, the damage at Reims are eloquent without any words of mine. I referred in an earlier essay to Aachen Cathedral as being built in Byzantine style and as being finished, after a thousand years' delay, in gilding and mosaics such as one can see also being put up in Westminster Cathedral. That style of decoration is associated in our minds rather with expensive restaurants and ballrooms than with churches, it is

true ; but during the Dark Ages it was the prevalent ecclesiastical style in the Mediterranean area—an area accustomed to the marble and colour of Greece and Rome. When, therefore, another style of church building appeared among the barbarians, the enlightened Europeans of the Eastern Empire and of Italy spoke of it contemptuously as merely barbarous, the work of Goths—Gothic, in fact.

Nevertheless, this despised style showed considerable vitality, and the buildings which rose under its influence became year by year more elaborate and magnificent. I cannot here stop to tell the wonderful story of the building of these cathedrals, of the travelling guilds of Free-Masons, with the secret signs by which they knew each other, of the carvers in wood and stone, of the metal-workers, of the stained-glass window-makers, of the organ-builders ; but it is all specially interesting, in view of modern attempts of associated workmen in the building and other trades to take on big works direct without the intervention of a contractor.

All I can say here—having just hinted at the interest of the subject of the cathedral-building guilds to the Syndicalist—is that, of all cathedrals in Europe, none surpassed and few approached in loveliness and majesty, in delicacy and in glory, in perfection of finish and variety of detail, the cathedrals of Central France. Reims, Nôtre Dame at Paris, and a dozen more should be mentioned. But all I can do here is to suggest the reason for their artistic importance. For they are not merely noble and stately piles, with—

Storied windows richly dight,  
Casting a dim religious light,

as our own Milton—Puritan though he was—so finely described them ; they were also the embodiment in

stone of all that the Middle Ages held to be most important. They have been called frozen music. Yet they were used also for the most prosaic of purposes on occasion. Cattle were stalled in them, and wounded soldiers. Their towers were watch-towers against the enemy. Yet their chief significance was in the thought they symbolized.

The first impression one gets of a Gothic church or cathedral is its wastefulness. Such big pillars, such awkward seating arrangements, such poor lighting, often such draughts ! Many an iron-girdered public-hall or big central mission is far better suited for the purposes of great religious gatherings than a Gothic cathedral. And yet if the architects of the cathedrals had only used their materials economically, one is tempted to murmur, how much more convenient a meeting-place they could have built. The towers and the spires, the flying buttresses—how much stone they take up, and yet without increasing the accommodation. Think of filling the spire of Salisbury with layer above layer of worshippers, their feet all dangling above the heads of the row beneath ! But however long one continued in that strain of argument, one would make no impression whatever on the architect—a man as a rule unknown to fame—of a mediæval cathedral. And why ? Simply because he was not concerned about the convenience and the comfort of congregations, ventilators and draughts, good light and acoustics. He had something else to remember. He had to remember that he was building a house of God. “My house shall be a house of prayer” had to be the ground-plan and elevation, the inspiring note, of his whole work. Man had to rise from earth to heaven, another Jacob’s ladder had to be reared for the soul of man to climb ; hence the waste of material, the narrow floor-space but the soaring arch, the pinched-in aisle but the flying buttresses, the darkened spaces but the “cloud-



capped pinnacle" of the central spire. It is in this respect that so many German churches, with their bulbous additions, are so lacking. The highest point about these churches, the point one has to throw one's head back to see, reminds one of the turnip, honest and sound enough but uninspiring; whereas even a modern Gothic spire dominates its area in a wonderful way. I well remember the discussion caused in Sheffield when St. Marie's, the Roman Catholic church, illuminated the cross at the top of its spire with green lights during George V's Coronation festivities. Fortunately, however, a still higher light was hoisted into position: the situation was saved by the red lamp which Vulcan held in his hand on the top of the Town Hall clock-tower. And this in a city which is proud of its connection with Ruskin!

This, then, is the supreme gift of mediæval France—the Gothic cathedral, a new creation, not merely the transference of Mediterranean ideas to Northern Europe. Nor were the French overwhelmed with the greatness of the achievement, as a lesser people might have been. Having produced their miracle of stone, they proceeded to show that they were greater than the triumph they had created; and so, to prevent the cathedral they had called into being from becoming too overpowering in its majesty, they trimmed it here and there with the quaintest touches of comic relief—gargoyles and, above all, grotesques, such as one sees high up on Notre Dame. The true spirit of France—the spirit of Irony—resides in the grinning yet meditative hobgoblin who looks from the parapet of Notre Dame, his chin in his hand, right across Paris. With this triple triumph, then—monasteries, crusades, universities, cathedrals (no, it is quadruple)—to her credit, we must turn from mediæval France.

During the troublous period of the Renaissance and the Reformation we must leave France to work

her own way unattended. She had her religious factions and a bloody massacre on the eve of St. Bartholomew ; she had her Protestant King—Henry of Navarre—who nevertheless thought that Paris was worth a Mass ; and she had her dynastic troubles and her Royal Family squabbles, in some of which our own Mary Queen of Scots was involved. During this age of transition also her architecture underwent a change, but emerged triumphant once more in the glorious châteaux of Touraine and the Loire—almost as perfect an expression of the ideas of the Renaissance as are the cathedrals those of an earlier age.

As in England so in France the confusions and struggles of the Renaissance and the Reformation strengthened the central power, and henceforth the monarch became more and more absolute. Just as in "Quentin Durward" we may see the beginnings of French autocracy, so also in that remarkable series of Dumas, "The Three Musketeers" and its many sequels—a series dealing, I believe, with the same body of soldiers as "Quentin Durward," the King's bodyguard—we catch glimpses of its later growth. In the works of Richelieu and Mazarin we see the steady building up of the royal power by the professional politicians, who disguised themselves under the robes of cardinals ; we see the King's Ministers bullying or bribing or cajoling or compelling noble after noble to relinquish his voice in the Government and to be content with the untaxed ease and pleasure of his Renaissance château. We see the process going on from the day when the French Princess Henrietta Maria goaded her unlucky husband, Charles I of England, into the desperate action which led him to the block by her constant taunt, "Be a King" (like my father in France), to the day when Louis XIV, *le Grand Monarque, le Roi Soleil*, looking over Paris, "*la Ville Lumière*," from Versailles, could say with perfect truth: *L'état c'est*

*moi* ("I am the State"), and the work of strengthening the throne stood complete. Paris focused France, Versailles—which had cost twenty millions—focused Paris, and Louis focused Versailles. We cannot understand France at its height until we have been through Versailles—and the Trianons, its adjuncts; and therefore we see once again the value of foreign travel. Let me, however, give a few descriptive points.

The chief characteristic of Versailles and its life was, perhaps, its formality: stiffness, even, is not too strong a term. The great garden front of the palace, with its columns and rows of windows; the broad terrace flanked with a stone balustrade supporting great vases and statues at regular intervals; the sweeping flights of steps which lead to the gardens spread symmetrically about the great basins with their elaborate fountains; and beyond these the long, long avenues of trees, straight and serried, leading to the lodge gates and so to the outer world. The smaller gardens, with their clipped yew hedges, backing statues, and miniature temples, were equally stiff and formal. Within the palace the same order, the same simplicity is to be noticed, magnificent indeed in detail, but almost bare in its spaces and absence of gimcrackery, cosy corners, golliwogs, china dogs, framed photographs, and all we are used to in English homes. The straight, rectangular dignity of the Mirror Hall, with its occasional gilt chairs and stools, where the King of Prussia was declared Emperor of Germany in 1870, is the embodiment of the French genius for definition and severe simplicity, combined with just proportions and fine finish in detail. The people who moved through these halls and grounds were as clear-cut and precise as the scenes among which they lived. The fashions of the day—we may perhaps summarize them as the style of Cinderella and the glass slipper—are

well known to us still ; for long after they ceased to be the costume of the great world they remained the costume of servants, and the Lord Mayor's coach and coachmen are to-day the direct descendants of the style of *le Grand Monarque*.

Nor were their thoughts and speech, their art and literature any less regulated than their architecture, their gardens, or their fashions. The large, empty areas of their rooms and terraces were intended as the assembly-places of courtly crowds who were not afraid to walk and bow, and, above all, talk. In a company which amuses itself thus, pictures, music, entertainments play but a secondary part, though such as are offered to the guests must necessarily be of the same rigorous form and finish as everything else in this remarkable period.

The rules of art were as tightly drawn as the rules of behaviour and Court etiquette. The poets and dramatists of the period were restricted in every way. Each line had to be complete in itself ; rhymes had to follow in a rigid sequence ; no change of scene was permitted in a play, and the acts had to follow each other as nearly as possible without any lengthy break of time—like the three days, or three months, or three years to which we are accustomed. And lastly their vocabularies were restricted to a ridiculous extent : such a word as “ dog ” was forbidden them, because it was a base word, a workaday word. If, therefore, a poet wished to refer to a dog he had to call it “ the respectable supporter of fidelity,” or something equally roundabout and pompous. The breaking of these rules by Hugo in his play “ *Hernani* ” produced a free fight in the theatre in the days when political energy, denied a rightful outlet in government, gave rise to the Romantic movement—i.e. just after Napoleon and Waterloo.

And so we could go on ; but I have said enough to convey the impression I aim at, an impression of

classic clearness, definiteness, almost coldness. And yet, in spite of its rigidity, perhaps even in a sense because of it, this age of Louis XIV is a very great age. It sees the rise of the classic French drama to its highest point. It is the age of Corneille, of Racine, of Molière. Richelieu, who had done so much towards building up the power of the King, also aided literature by helping to found the Academy ; while Molière's theatre, the Comédie Française, became a State institution, and has remained so to the present day. And French drama still penetrates freely to other lands—especially to England.

It was the clearness and definiteness of the French genius which gave French institutions of all sorts so great an advantage, so good a start, during this period. The writers, dramatists, artists, builders, tailors of the age of Louis XIV knew exactly the effect they aimed at producing, and thus frequently succeeded in their aim. And not only was their clearness of vision and expression an advantage to France in her internal development ; it gave her also a lead among other nations of Europe which she has never lost. France had a vision and a purpose : therefore she led in all things ; her clear voice compelled the obedience of her unformed neighbours. Milton had been Latin Secretary to Oliver Cromwell, or, as we should now call him, Foreign Secretary. In his day, therefore, the foreign correspondence of our country—and, indeed, of all countries—was carried on in the ancient universal language of the Roman Empire and Church. But very shortly after Milton's day Latin gave place to French as the language of diplomacy, as, indeed, we have already seen, and they say, that to-day a French Ambassador may always be known by his ignorance of every language except his own, which is the only one he needs, as all Foreign Offices and ambassadors use *his* language :—for from the moment

when the Academy had overhauled the French language, and given it an authoritative grammar, spelling, and so forth, and thus rendered clearer still its natural clearness, no language in Europe could compare with it for general utility.

The spread of French as the polite and diplomatic language of Europe was helped by the spread of French fashions and ideas all over the Continent. Indeed, one French success paved the way for another. And not only is French to-day the patois of Europe, which we all have to learn as early as possible, but every European capital has its Versailles, modelled largely on the lines of the great French palace, near at hand. Our own Hampton Court has fountains by the designer of Versailles; there is Herrenhausen outside Hanover, Nymphenburg outside Munich, Schönbrunn outside Vienna, and, above all, Potsdam, that splendid series of palaces stretching mile after mile to the west of Berlin. All these bear stronger or fainter traces of French influence, but Potsdam is the most interesting of them all.

We have already walked in imagination through the Sans-Souci palace and seen Frederick the Great's writing-table; but I wish to mention another room in this palace, the room in which Voltaire, the great and bitter French philosopher, lived under Frederick's protection when driven for his opinions out of France. In this room one realizes the strength of French influence in the eighteenth century; one remembers that Frederick, founder of Prussia though he was, talked and wrote and read French, and corresponded with French friends with apparently no thought for the native language he was neglecting. We see his manuscripts and his music and his library; and we have to remind ourselves that we are not in the study of a French noble, but of the great Warrior King of the Prussians himself.

I have already in an earlier essay shown how strong French influence was upon German literature, and in particular on the German drama. We have only to look through the furniture makers' and decorators' catalogues, the milliners' styles, the cooks' recipes, the potters' workrooms, the weavers' sheds to realize how great French influence was and is in every branch of art, fine and applied, not only in Germany, but throughout Europe. Louis Quinze, Louis Seize, Pompadour, Du Barry, Gobelins, Sèvres, even the "Soles Colbert" of the menu card—all have a dominant place in the world of decoration, design, and good living.

Nor have we even yet exhausted the influence of France at the height of her glory. Not only was she the arbiter of fashion and the dictator of literature, she was also the leader in war. Versailles alone cost Louis XIV twenty million pounds, and Versailles was by no means his only palace. Well, for the interest on that sum, about half a million a year, he could keep our own King Charles II in his pocket, and get him to direct England's foreign policy on lines which suited France. He pushed his boundaries to the Rhine, taking in Alsace-Lorraine, and pressed so hard on Holland that the Stadtholder, William of Orange, talked about dying in the last ditch (that is where the phrase comes from), and accepted the Crown of England really for the sake of turning England's forces, such as they were, against France on Holland's behalf. But not only to the east and north-east was Louis victorious; he also established his influence over Spain, which he secured for his grandson, Philip V, in the teeth of the opposition of Austria and England, led by Marlborough. The struggle for Spain was the famous War of the Spanish Succession, in which we scored the Flemish victories of Oudenarde, Ramillies, and Malplaquet, and the South German victory of Blen-

heim—all against either the French or their allies the Bavarians. It was also for help rendered to Austria in this war, we should remember, that the Elector of Brandenburg was allowed by the Emperor to call himself King of Prussia.

After this war, although, as a result of it, Louis' grandson sat on the Spanish throne, France was not the same country as she had been before it. The capture of Namur from Louis in 1695 by our own Dutch William was the first check that French arms had received for thirty years; and henceforth the military glory of *le Grand Monarque* began to dim. But the Power that begins to lose its hold on the supremacy it has once established cannot expect any intervals for recovery. Her rivals and victims are too watchful and resentful for that, and thus we find France plunged still farther into wars which she was less and less economically fitted to bear. While, indeed, the French coffers—despite the wise efforts of Colbert—were being drained, the coffers of England, her chief rival, were being heaped up with the profits of the South Sea and Eastern trade, largely the result of the treaty which ended the last great war—the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 (just a couple of centuries back, be it observed); and France had to plod wearily on and on through the greater part of the eighteenth century, fighting in Europe and doing her best to protect her Indian and American possessions against England; all of which is, however, better left till we consider the story from England's point of view.

The pressure of war soon began to tell upon France, and the changes which occurred in that fair land are grievous to record. The nobles, who had been ousted from the Government by Richelieu, were living a life entirely separated from that of their tenants, the peasants. Still more remote from reality was the great society which continued to fill the



palace and domain at Versailles—a crowd of exquisites who still managed to amuse themselves in the midst of defeat and poverty as light-heartedly as they had done in the days when Louis XIV's generals were sending in trophies from all the battle-fields of Europe. In the grounds of Versailles there were still the Trianons: the Grand Trianon which Louis XIV himself had built, and beyond that the Petit Trianon, built for Louis XVI's lively Queen, Marie Antoinette, an Austrian by birth, and where she played at dairy-farming with her ladies.

We all know Watteau's pictures, and those little Dresden figures of shepherds and shepherdesses in buckled shoes, lace ruffles, and pink bows on their crooks and round the necks of their frisky lambs. Well, that represented the Court's conception of work on the land. If we compare one of these dainty figures with the stern, sombre statues of Meunier or the solemn paintings of Millet, we learn at once how far the Court was removed from the realities of the peasants' lot. Once a courtier is said to have told the Queen that the people had no bread. The Queen was surprised for a moment, but only for a moment. "But can't they eat cake?" she is reported to have asked. Some years later a more truculent aristocrat said, "Then let them eat grass!" So, when his head was struck off in the Revolution and hoisted on a pike, its mouth was filled with grass before it went round the streets of Paris.

Revolution! I have uttered the word perhaps before its time, for it was not yet, although its shadow was already darkening. Already the thinkers and writers of France were growing uneasy. The conventions of an aristocratic age, framed simply to please an aristocratic Court, were already growing hollow and unreal, and the bravest and boldest of writers were already saying things which brought

down on their heads the wrath of the Court and drove them into exile.

We have already seen Voltaire made welcome at Potsdam by Frederick the Great, although the two soon quarrelled, and Voltaire went to England, where he became quite an Anglomaniac, and actually discovered Shakespeare ! Then, rather later, there was Rousseau, who had somehow arrived at the idea that all men, and not only the dandies of Versailles and their women-folk, had rights. Again, there was the vigorous Diderot, who with his friends undertook the gigantic business of setting forth all existing knowledge in an Encyclopædia, so that all the world, and not only a select mutual admiration society, might drink deep of the Pierian Spring, as our own poet Pope was calling the well of knowledge at about the same time. All these men had to meet persecution, and a group of prisoners in the Bastille often formed the finest literary and philosophic *salon* in Europe during these years of stress in France.

Thus the age, though decaying in one way, was germinating in another, just as the autumn sows the seeds of the ensuing spring. The ideas of this age, the age of Louis XV and of Louis XVI, are indeed seedpods of immense potency, such potency that they have not yet ceased to germinate, nor ever will. When Burns sang, "A man's a man for a' that," he was simply setting Rousseau to a tune ; and as we go farther we shall see that the triumphs of this new period of French influence are greater by far than the triumphs of the period which rejected its most characteristic ideas, the age of Louis XIV ; for the classic period of *le Grand Monarque* was great by reason of its form ; it was the era of style ; whereas the age of Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Encyclopædists was the age of ideas—form-shattering and explosive, liberating, fructifying, even when most violent and destructive, like lightning in the soil.

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the thinkers of this period was their firm, I had almost said their touching, belief in the efficacy of Reason. History, tradition, things as they were, with their roots in the past, were hopelessly bad ; all one could work for was to—

Shatter it to bits,  
And mould it nearer to the heart's desire,

and to discover the heart's desire by the light of Pure Reason—a light which appealed to the French, with their love of the clear-cut, definite, logical, and formal.

I can give here only one instance of the working out of this application of Pure Reason by the philosophers of eighteenth-century France—but it is a very important one.

Rousseau started his train of thought on the assumption that, just as a man has arms and legs, so has he certain inherent and inalienable rights : of existence, of liberty, and so forth. In my Introduction I pointed out that the war has reminded us what our rights really are—simply such privileges and freedoms as the State can afford to leave with us under the circumstances of the moment : that no man has rights against the State, but must be content with his State allowance of liberty. Well, Rousseau, pursuing his imaginary and quite unhistorical—but nevertheless very useful—conception of man and his rights into its deeper recesses, arrived at the conclusion that the State was a sort of club or co-operative society made up by men joining together for their mutual benefit : protection, for example. To gain this benefit the individual gave up some portion of his inherent liberty, just as we give up some portion of our cash when we join a cricket or football club. By joining the State, as by joining a club of any,

sort, we allow ourselves to be ordered about, we lose liberty to a certain extent ; but we keep all we have not given up, just as we still have our evenings to ourselves even if on Saturday afternoons we are put in goal when we know we are born centre-forwards. So having most of our liberty left us, the little drawbacks of our associated relationships do not worry us much, and we get along quite comfortably and everybody is satisfied.

But suppose that our club takes our subscription and never gives us a game, or puts us just once or twice into the second team merely to keep us quiet, what do we do then? Why, we resign, and not only save the amount of our subscription, but also regain our full freedom. Instead of freezing in goal, we are again at liberty to freeze in the company of twenty thousand enthusiasts at a League match on Saturday afternoon. We have resumed our liberty.

We can, and do, withdraw from a club which is not treating us as we think we should be treated. Now, can we withdraw from the State in a similar way, and can a State which is working badly call, as it were, a meeting, like a club meeting, discharge the committee, dismiss the secretary, distrain on the treasurer, and make a fresh start? Rousseau thought all that was possible, since it was a reasonable and logical deduction from his premisses that man has this inalienable right or quality called liberty which he can pool or loan or reassume as it suits his purpose ; and that since Reason is supreme and all-compelling, the conclusions to which Reason leads us are not only valid but practicable.

Rousseau was thus a thinker who placed the individual first, and accorded the State only such functions and such powers as the individual allowed it to exercise ; that is to say, he was an Individualist. He also regarded the State as a society or organization resting on the consent or voluntary submission

of all its members ; he could not conceive of the State as possessing any powers of compulsion that were not, as it were, in the Articles of Association, in the rules which had been drawn up by the members and which new members voluntarily accepted. Since he refused to acknowledge the State's power of compulsion, since he regarded the State as resting entirely on consent and co-operation, he was essentially, though perhaps not formally, an Anarchist—that is, one who disbelieves in the use of compulsion in the matter of government, one who thinks that voluntary combination, such as one finds in a co-operative society, a dissenting chapel, a club of any sort (all essentially anarchic in their fundamental conception), will produce all the government and regulation that human society needs.

In any corporate body, to take the next step, the most basic thing is the meeting of members or shareholders who have the ultimate power of deciding the destinies of the concern. Similarly the real basis of the State is the meeting of its members—in other words, the machinery—votes, elections, parliaments, assemblies, or whatsoever they may happen to be called—by which the individual expresses his views on matters of State.

Thus to Rousseau, with his enthusiasm for individual liberty (of which in his own affairs he availed himself to the full, by the way), the State became a ballot-box restricted to the smallest possible range of common interests and activities. The province of the State must be restricted in order that individual liberty may be as great as possible, and the vote—as widespread as possible—is the means whereby the State is directed (in its own small sphere) in accordance with the wishes of the members.

Thus Rousseau appears as the father of various other schools of thought besides the Individualists and Anarchists. His theories underlie the policy of that

school of statesmen (if such they can be called) who in the nineteenth century wrought such damage in England—damage which we, with our education committees, doctors, nurses, clinics, free meals, and so on, are still vainly trying to combat—the school of *laissez-faire*, the Manchester School, the school of “anarchy plus the policeman” as the ideal of the State, the school that believed that what benefited the individual benefited also the community, the school of individualism and the Tom-Tiddler’s-Ground view of England that I have already dwelt upon.

Then, again, Rousseau’s simple faith in the ballot-box makes him the father of those political philosophers who regard the putting right of our electoral machinery as the one and only vital reform, since, the voting machine once made infallible, all other reforms will evolve of themselves by the counting of noses—or crosses. And thus Rousseau may claim among his spiritual descendants the Jacobins, the Chartists, with their parliamentary star of the five—or six—points (my great-grandfather was a special constable at the “Horns,” Kennington, when Wellington had to deal with the Chartists’ demonstration), the Radicals, and last, though not least, the Suffragettes, for do not they also believe that, the vote once won, the millennium will spring like a Jack-out-of-the-ballot-box?

I have said that Rousseau’s theories were important, and that is why I have tried to make them clear. They are important when we remember who can be numbered among his descendants, even though his theories were based on false and fanciful descriptions of human origins, and although in some of their applications they have come perilously near to one good custom corrupting the world. Further, we are faced with this difficulty: a faulty basis has given rise to a most useful theory—the theory, nay more, the burning conviction that “a man’s a man for a’

that," and that his claim to be treated as such is inalienable. Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in "What's Wrong with the World?" shows himself in this respect a real follower of Rousseau. He takes the case of a slum girl whose hair is beautiful but unclean. The authorities say it must therefore be cut off. Not so, says Mr. Chesterton. The glory of a woman is her hair. Therefore, so far from her crowning glory being shorn away, conditions of life, of cleanliness, of housing, of the mother's leisure, must be so altered that the girl's hair may be kept clean and she may wear an untarnished aureole around her head. With that girl's red-gold hair, indeed, he undertakes to set fire to the thing which calls itself our twentieth-century commercial civilization. As a matter of historical fact, however, it has always been the other way. The State has always forced the individual into the path it wills. There have been no contracts. The State exists before the individual ; and no baby has ever been known to address with its first breath its parents as representative of the State to the effect that it is prepared to love, honour, and obey them in their public capacity in return for such board, lodging, and washing as its frail condition demands. Human beings are gregarious, like sheep, oxen, and wolves ; they live in crowds, and out of these crowds of human creatures the State somehow has emerged. Perhaps the nearest approach to a contract is the christening of a child and the promises made in his name by his godparents ; but that does not take us very far, nowadays at any rate.

Yet, for the adjusting of the balance, for the maintenance of the essential humanity of man which is ever being threatened by the Juggernaut wheels of the State, it is just as well that the individual shall be encouraged to kick, even against the pricks ; it at least develops his muscles. And so long as he is so encouraged it is not of vital importance whether

the teaching which encourages him is sound historically or only one of those Vital Lies which Ibsen speaks of now and again. The Pragmatist judges of theories by their fruits, not by their roots, and thus he approves the theory of Rousseau. We see now quite clearly why Rousseau's themes were so important: they were inspired by an ideal, even though the fact foundations he based them on were more than questionable.

The curious thing about the writings of these philosophers is that they found a large and appreciative circle among the *noblesse*, whose severance from the mass of the people was a chief cause of the trouble that was already brewing. The clearness of thought and ease of expression of the philosophic writers won the praise of the great little world of Versailles, and the discussion of political theories became quite a fashionable pastime among the courtiers, who never dreamt that one day these same theories would be put into practice with crude ferocity on their own delicate necks. The French *noblesse* of the eighteenth century were as blind to the real significance of the philosophic literature they dabbled in as were the twentieth-century English reading public before the war to the real significance of the writings of the Superman, Master-morality, war-worshipping school of present-day German writers.

But I do not wish to suggest that Rousseau's theories were the real cause of the Revolution. Revolutions are not produced by epigrams or philosophic treatises: they are the outcome of gross and palpable ills of the body politic, and the chief cause of the French Revolution was the bankruptcy of France which resulted from the dragging wars of the previous half-century.

The last of these had been the help given by France to the American colonies of England in their revolt from the Mother Country, in a sense a war of



revenge for the defeats of the Seven Years War which lost France Canada and India. But as it turned out, revenge of this sort proved a veritable boomerang, for it was largely the return of the French troops from this war which started the French Revolution. In the Louvre in Paris, standing in the gardens between its two great wings, may be seen a statue of Lafayette, Carlyle's "Hero of two Worlds," given by the American Republic to the French Republic as a recognition of the help which France had always given America, while outside New York stands the great statue of Liberty given by France to the United States. Now Lafayette was not only a French general helping the Americans to rebel, he was also a leader of the early and moderate revolutionary party in France, the Girondins, and the ideas of liberty which his French soldiers had brought back from their contact with the liberty-loving colonists of the New England States greatly helped the spread of the revolutionary movement in France. Thus the Revolution started, but its course can be read in Carlyle's graphic volumes.

All we need concern ourselves with was the effect which the great upheaval produced on Europe.

Now the chief characteristic of a Revolution is its destructiveness, and the French Revolution was destructive beyond all others, not only by reason of its long-pent-up energy, but also because the ideas of the time favoured destructiveness as a preliminary to reconstruction. Thus we see going on in France a breaking up of institutions which was bound to affect most profoundly the surrounding States. The throne and the nobility perished, as everybody knows; can we not gather as much from "The Only Way" and "The Scarlet Pimpernel," our great popular authorities on the period? But perhaps the thoroughness of the destruction and its logicity are not so widely realized. Not only were the women knitters in the

law-courts voting nobles and aristocrats to the guillotine, but the active-minded Revolutionists were prepared also to remodel every institution of political or public significance.

The old Provinces which had kept France divided for so long were cut up into Departments as we now see them on the map, and named, most reasonably, for the most part according to the rivers which flow through them; the ancient, complicated, and absurd system of weights and measures was scrapped, and a brand-new system was founded on the perfectly reasonable metre, which the scientific men of the period made as nearly one ten-millionth of the distance between the Pole and the Equator as they could. The Revolutionists also objected to the antiquated and ridiculous system of days, months, and years they found in the calendar, the days and the months named for the most part after heathen deities and in some cases so wrongly named as to be most misleading. Why, for instance, should the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth months have names which in themselves mean that the months are the seventh (Septem-ber), eighth (Octo-ber), ninth (Novem-ber), and tenth (Decem-ber), merely because Julius Cæsar chose to fit in a month of his own (July), and his successor, Augustus, not to be outdone, added August in the spirit (reversed) of "Tommy, make room for your uncle"? Those logical-minded believers in the supremacy of Reason, the French Revolutionists, could not stand such wanton absurdity, so they tore up their calendar and renamed the months according to their natural characteristics: Brumière, the foggy month; Fructidor, the fruitful month; Thermidor, the hot month, and so on.

Then as to the year. Why should they begin to count from the birth of Christ—a purely guesswork date for one thing, and for another (and more important) a recognition of the supremacy of the

Church : a supremacy which the Revolutionists, whose memories of the higher clergy, if not of the lower, were very bitter, totally denied. So they scrapped *Anno Domini*, and with it the creed of Christ, and they put in the place of A.D. Year One (or Two, as the case might be) of the Republic and in the place of Christianity the Goddess of Reason, whose statue they erected in the Champ de Mars and honoured by breaking up before it the plaster-cast images of all the other gods they thought were worthy to be put up, like so many old Aunt Sallys, for the purpose of being knocked down again.

Now all this was reason run mad ; we might, indeed, say that the fury of the French Revolution was a riot of reason ; or rather, that the French Revolutionists, acting in reality on their deep but inarticulate emotions, on their anger, their despair, their hope for a brighter future, thought they were simply carrying out the dictates of their supreme reason. For we all know that reason is *not* supreme. We smile to-day when we hear a French mother tell her toddling child to "be reasonable," for we know that its reason is not developed ; nor does the development of reason come inevitably with advancing years ; while we are quite safe in saying that at no period of even the most reasonable and intellectual man's career is reason the supreme and unchallenged guide of his life. It is and can be never more than the rein and the bit ; but emotion, imagination, enthusiasm, prejudice even, are only too ready to take the bit between their teeth and bolt. This is how mankind is made ; and the French are the most human of mankind, in spite of their belief in Reason. Nevertheless this belief undoubtedly strengthened them in the task of making a clean sweep of existing institutions : it was to them another Vital Lie ; they felt they were quite right to apply the criticism of the hammer to everything they found,

and to destroy whatever seemed to them unreasonable. We in England, on the other hand, are so deficient in boldness that alone among the people of Western Europe we cling to our antique weights and measures, our preposterous spelling, and our dear old unwieldy shire of Yorks—with its three Ridings, pretending that which is not.

However much the Revolution may have accomplished in the way of change, it had not, however, altered the real nature of the French. No revolution could do that; and before long the chaos which worked itself through the successive stages of the Reign of Terror was resolved into a Government of the sort under which France has always been greatest—a military autocracy (for France, like Germany, believes in war; but I think with this difference: that the French are born fighters, whereas the Germans buy their fighting power only at a great price).

At any rate, France emerges from the Revolution as a first-class fighting State once more. Even in her earliest days revolutionary France had shown herself a fighter, and the joyous frenzy of the Valmy cannonade had blown the serried ranks of Prussia to pieces as we have already seen. But soon Dumouriez and his *sans-culottes* were to be superseded by a young Corsican who knew how to use artillery even better than they did, and from that day to this artillery has been the Frenchman's chief weapon. Napoleon harnessed the French Revolution: he found it like a vast rush of steam hissing its way through a rent it had torn in the side of its enclosing boiler; he managed by applying the right machinery for the purpose to turn all this waste energy to account. The enthusiasm of the Revolution, in short, was the driving force behind Napoleon I's armies. Napoleon could not afford to play the high and mighty King of kings rôle

even at the height of his glory; and many a tale, from the story of his washerwoman "the Duchess of Dantzic" onwards, turns on the contrast between Napoleon the adventurer and Napoleon the Lord of Europe. We have therefore to regard Napoleon as the rider on the whirlwind of the Revolution, and under his leadership French armies were in a very real sense a liberating force in Europe. "I war," Napoleon said in effect, "against Governments, not against peoples"; and as a matter of fact the French armies were usually welcomed by the inhabitants of the districts they invaded. Thus Napoleon, though a military absolutist, was also at the same time ruler of a Liberal State and representative at the head of his Army of Liberal principles. His violence was the beneficent violence of the plough: not that Napoleon was intentionally a benefactor, but because his own self-aggrandizement happened to coincide with the triumphs of revolutionary principles enforced by French arms. He and his people were optimists, fighting—for their own glory, yes, but through that for a brighter era ahead of them (whereas Germany, bemused as she is by the idea of evolution through brutality, is fighting the desperate cause of Pessimism and doing her best to reverse the tide of human development and send it flowing back into the Dark Ages of Attila and his Huns—who passed away without leaving anything but a wake of destruction).

If we need evidence of Napoleon's liberalizing ideas, we have simply to turn to his reconstitution of Poland: Nicholas II is simply repeating Napoleon's work at the interval of a century; and if Napoleon had only been able to halt on the Russian frontiers of Poland and refuse that fatal invasion of Russia, how different would the fate of Europe have been! The impulse of the French Revolution was felt beyond the area of even

Napoleon's campaigns ; and the rising of the subject States of the Balkans against their Turkish masters early in the nineteenth century is due to it. We shall have, however, to consider this movement in our next essay.

Nor must we think of Napoleon as liberal on his campaigns only. Mr. J. E. C. Bodley has written a very big book on France to show how largely all that is stable and solid in the France of to-day is the work of Napoleon. He and not the Revolutionists remoulded France. He tactfully shelved the eccentricities which represented the heart's desire of the worshippers of Reason : Brumière and the rest—it is not so easy to remould effectively as to destroy effectively ; and with the re-establishment of Anno Domini he re-established also relations with the Church and drew up a Concordat which remained effective for a century—until a few years ago, indeed, when the Associations Law broke the agreement and turned the monks out of France. The Civil Code, the Code Napoléon, is the body of law administered in the French courts to-day. Nor did he disdain to look after the material concerns of his Empire. The great French roads owe much to him ; and he established the beet-sugar industry.

But for all his glory and real greatness he was overthrown. Moscow, Leipsic, Waterloo mark his downfall, and France was forced to take back the long-exiled Bourbons. A Holy Alliance tried to stamp out in Europe the seeds of liberty that France had sown ; and it looked as though the great volcanic upheaval of the Revolution and the glittering glories of the Empire had been in vain. But the forces of beneficent destruction were only slumbering beneath their crater, Paris ; and in 1848 the second French Revolution awoke a sympathetic thrill throughout Europe : even Prussia felt it, as we

have seen, and remote Schleswig-Holstein. But this second outburst, interesting though it is in so many ways—we might do worse than look into the working of the *Ateliers Publiques* of the period (some people say they were planned to fail from the beginning)—must not detain us. Though a great deal of the theorizing which has made its appearance of late years in the ranks of Labour can be traced to the leaders of this Revolution, and though the leaders did not stop at theory but ventured to put some at least of their theories to the test of practice, yet we must leave this second and less well-known French Revolution with this: that not only had France proved herself yet once again the fountain-head of ideas and the stimulator of Liberal movements throughout Europe, but she had again fallen under the spell of a military adventurer. Louis Napoleon repeats almost in detail the steps by which his much greater uncle, Napoleon I, gained the Imperial Throne. And thus we arrive at the second Empire—a far less wholesome and glorious regime than that of Napoleon I. But it shared with the first Empire the essential characteristic of military adventure. No Buonaparte could hope to retain his hold on the imagination of France, and therefore on her loyalty, without victories. So Napoleon III set out on his wars. (Napoleon II never reigned. He was the son of Napoleon I and Marie Louise and faded away in the lifeless Court of Vienna.) But Napoleon III was no Heaven-sent leader of armies. It is true he defeated Austria, but that was no great achievement: she is the most unlucky State in Europe as far as war is concerned, and she is not too lucky in other ways. It is true again that by defeating Austria and driving her out of Italy he helped indirectly—as we have already seen—in the founding of a United Italy under Victor Emmanuel, King of Sardinia and

grandfather of the present King of Italy. It is true also that he helped England against Russia in the Crimea and that he interfered in the affairs of Mexico. More important perhaps because more successful was the canal building of French engineers at this period—the accomplished Suez Canal, which his uncle Napoleon I had first considered in 1798, and the projected Panama Canal. But none of these minor and uninspiring successes compares for a moment with even the smallest of the great Napoleonic campaigns ; and the disasters of 1870—due as they were to the carelessness and slackness of the Imperial Government, to its overconfidence in itself and ignorance of Prussian preparedness—entirely shattered the military prestige, such as it was, of Napoleon the Little, broke up his Empire, drove him and his wife Eugénie as exiles to England, and plunged France into the horrors of the Commune of 1871. As Mr. G. K. Chesterton points out in his “*Victorian Literature*,” 1870 was the death of Liberalism. “Liberalism had been barricaded by Bismarck with blood and iron and by Darwin with blood and bone,” he says. Bismarck founded the German Empire, Darwin supplied the Survival of the Fittest idea which, distorted and misapplied, has inspired Bismarck’s Empire from its foundation onwards.

But the third Revolution of the Commune did not give rise to a third military dictatorship, for the simple reason that France had only just rid herself—with the help of Germany—of the ineffective militarism of Napoleon III. Instead, a Republic, the third Republic, was founded : not because it moved any single Frenchman to enthusiasm, but simply because it was that form of government which divided Frenchmen least. Indeed, many of those who had done most to bring the Republic about fully expected it to collapse very quickly ; and the first



President, Marshal MacMahon, regarded himself as practically nothing more than a warming-pan for the Bourbons. But, as usual, the Bourbons had learned nothing and their chance passed—so completely, indeed, that to-day they cannot even enlist as privates in the French Army. The Buonapartes were of course impossible: and so the Republic managed to survive. Yet the ever-recurring desire of France for a military leader has been an ever-present source of danger to the Republic. Even such a circus-Napoleon as General Boulanger on his white horse seemed at one time as though he might come within measurable distance of a *coup d'état* and its resultant autocracy: only he shot himself on a lady's grave and the Republic breathed again. But once more it was threatened. The Dreyfus case had raised the dangerous problem of the Army against the Nation, and at the funeral of President Félix Faure—of whom more anon—Paul Deroulède, a great Anti-Dreyfus leader and an ardent supporter of the Army, actually stepped out from the crowds lining the streets, seized the bridle of the horse on which the Military Governor of Paris—I think it was—sat, and tried to turn him towards the Presidential House. "A l'Elysée!" he said. Had the Governor allowed himself to be led thus out of his course, a *coup d'état* might have resulted, since Paris was full of soldiers and the Anti-Dreyfusards had a large following among the Parisians.

Thus it becomes clear that France dearly loves a soldier—whereas Germany goose-steps to the word of command—and her martial instincts, thwarted and misdirected, play havoc with her internal peace. But once these same instincts find their true sphere, France is herself again. Her troublesome period was her period of isolation and soreness: of revenge-dreaming and recovery-planning. When, however, she was able to hold her head up again

among the Powers of Europe and feel that the future held something for her after all, many of her domestic troubles disappeared.

The Russian Alliance was the turn of the tide in the affairs of France. When De Witte began his work of developing Russian resources—railways, manufactures, mines, and so forth—he looked round for the capital his projects demanded: and he found that the readiest lenders were the French peasants. And for this reason: the French peasant is a very thrifty person, the hardest worker perhaps in Europe. Paris, indeed, gives one quite a wrong idea of France, which in its rural districts at least is a solemn and serious, almost a dour, land. The French farmer tills his own fields and his wife keeps his accounts. The man does the handwork, the woman the headwork: with the result that there are always funds waiting for investment. Now the one thing which that admirable business woman the farmer's wife wants in an investment is not high interest but security: so she is always on the look-out for gilt-edged Stock, of which the most heavily gilt is of course Government Loans. Thus it was that the gold of French peasants helped to build the railways and factories of Russia and to sink her mines. Thus it was that the two States, one on either side of Germany, (who after Bismarck's fall had cancelled Bismarck's wise treaty with Russia), were drawn together by community of interest. I well remember the thrill which went through Europe, and especially France, when the Czar proposed the health of the Allied Nations at a lunch he gave on, I think, his yacht the *Standart* in the Baltic to President Faure. It was as though France, neglected and forlorn, had received suddenly and unexpectedly a splendid offer of marriage. One of the finest bridges which spans the Seine to-day is the Alexander III Bridge. Near by is the figure of Strasburg, so long seated amid her

mourning wreaths in the Place de la Concorde, but now once again sitting as clear-cut in the sunshine as any of her sister cities in the Place.

The Alliance with Russia was followed by the Entente with England, the work of that "good European," Edward VII, who was quite as much at home in Paris as he was in London. This Entente, which followed the troublesome incident of Fashoda, when the French tried to establish themselves on the Upper Nile, recognized that England should be left undisturbed and given a free hand in Egypt while France enjoyed a similar freedom in Morocco. But here we get back again to the ground we were traversing in our German studies, so there is no need to retread it now.

I undertook in this essay to show what France had accomplished for civilization in her gloriously diversified career. I feel that the record of France even in my brief summary of it stands on its own feet: it needs no apologist. Nevertheless I should like to give a few more illustrations of that spirit which made France so great under Louis XIV, and which has continued to inform her national life ever since—the spirit of Art.

Paris is the one capital in Western Europe where it is better to be an artist or a writer than a merely successful man of business. France has a belief in education which beats even that of Germany, if we may judge by the way in which the professors in the French Lycées are treated. They have only some seven or eight hours' teaching a week, and they retire on a two-thirds pension at fifty-five or sixty with a remainder to their widows. They have no disciplinary or administrative duties: these are undertaken by their subordinates, the *répétiteurs*. But they are expected to engage in original work in their own subject, as only

in this way, the Government argue, can the teacher be kept really efficient for his vitally important work. The University staffs are chosen from the best of the school professors ; and recently when the question of increasing the teaching hours in the Lycées was raised, it was decided that there would be no real economy in doing so. When, some two or three years ago, I arranged to work weekly for the same number of teaching hours as a French Lycée professor, I was obliged at the same time to drop more than half my salary, as my Education Committee said I was working only part time. When, again, in a former situation I wished to undertake original work, I was told that I must do it in my holidays, as it would interfere with my work in school if I attempted it in addition to my teaching. Self-improvement is thus for English teachers a holiday task to be undertaken in summer schools. We may say, then, that France is as disciplined in the things of the mind as is Germany, yet with this difference : that whereas German training brings up the German to reverence and appreciate what his teachers hold to be great, the French training furnishes its people with a still keener edge to their naturally strong individuality, a still finer critical sense than that with which Nature has gifted them, because it is a critical sense sharpened, not blunted, on masterpieces. Whereas German Imperialism can heap up a monstrous box of bricks and call it a Liberation monument, the opinion of the man in the street is a constant check on the French architect and sculptor.

When Napoleon wanted to distract his Parisians' thoughts from the bad news that was dribbling through from Moscow, he ordered the dome of the Invalides to be gilt, knowing how such an innovation would fill the mind of the Parisians. If such a piece of work were undertaken in a provincial town

in England, public interest would be centred on the one question, Who has the contract? In London probably nobody would know anything at all about it till the work was done past recall. In England we may be mildly critical of the cameo-like beauties of a new English postage stamp; but we care nothing for the Shakespeare National Memorial Scheme, which ought to mature in 1916, but which is by this time, I suppose, hopelessly forgotten. If we had a Napoleon over us at the present moment, he would at once begin the National Theatre out of public funds, and on a splendid scale. If there were no national funds, he would not hesitate to use the Prince of Wales' Fund for the purpose. But we are not under Napoleon, and perhaps, after all, we are not ready for a National Theatre, since "It's a long way to Tipperary" in the battlefield of Art as in the battlefield of Arms.

Napoleon's interest in the State theatres of France was certainly keen. Even during his short stay in Moscow before it took fire he busied himself with revising the constitution of Molière's theatre, the Comédie Française. We can imagine the comment of the British taxpayer if he had heard that Lord Roberts or Lord Kitchener had given time to the police regulations of, let us say, the Johannesburg "Empire"—if there is such a place—during the Boer War. "Why, sir," I can hear him saying, "why is he wasting his time and our money over such nonsense? Let him give his attention to the affairs of another Empire—the British Empire!" and his wife would look up at him admiringly through her spectacles.

Napoleon had a catholic taste in Art. Not only was he interested in the drama, and numbered Talma, the great actor of the period, among his friends, but he followed Marlborough's example, and brought home with him from his campaigns many,

of the finest works of art of the lands he had subdued—the bronze horses from the portico of St. Mark's, Venice, for instance. Paris was indeed a treasure-house in the days of the First Empire ; but of course all these works had to be restored in 1815.

The Republican and Napoleonic eras are not, however, merely eras of destruction and accumulation. They originated and left behind them their own distinctive styles, and we have to add to those we mentioned as belonging to Louis XIV those also of the Directoire and Empire ; while still, of course, Paris is the headquarters of the painters, the sculptors, and the designers.

But perhaps it is not the French love of art which appeals most to Englishmen. I think they have been more struck by the dash and daring with which the French have put their theories to the test of actual application, not only in the world of politics but in the world of mechanics also. It was a Frenchman, Montgolfier, who first risked going up in a balloon, and that a fire balloon, the idea of which he had obtained from Cavendish's work. Most of the machines the perfection of which comes with the experience gained in the dangerous use of their earliest forms—the motor, the motor-cycle, the submarine, the aeroplane, and so forth—are of French origin. Prudent and practical England looks on while quixotic Frenchmen dash themselves to pieces in the practical application of theoretic formulæ, and then, when most of the risk has been taken, adopt and develop the machine. I well remember the comment of a provincial newspaper—I will not name it as I am none too sure of our delightful English law of libel—when the first aviator looped the loop—a Frenchman, of course. It was all very well for a Frenchman, it said, to do the trick, but Englishmen had better be careful. However, the trick once done,

our men soon took it up, and probably at the present moment an Englishman holds the record for the number of loops ; nevertheless, the glory and risk, first of the idea itself, then of its carrying out, with all their spiritual value, are the inalienable possession of the French, not of their imitators, English and other. Even in the world of mere physical prowess the French have given us some fairly startling results. I was never so delighted as when Carpentier—now an airman—knocked out Wells in I forget how few rounds. We thought, at least, that we could box, whereas the Frenchman only kicked. A French Rugby team at play is also a sight worth seeing, whatever lack of finish they may show.

So, then, what shall we say in conclusion? This merely : That if we fought the relatively liberal, humane, and generous Imperialism of Napoleon—an optimistic Imperialism which shot like lava from the depths of the French Revolution and, disintegrating, formed most fertile soil—till we had destroyed it, how much more are we prepared to fight the leaden, lowering, cynical, and brutal Imperialism of the Germans, with its materialistic pessimism and its step backward in the scale of civilization? The spirit of France is the very antithesis of that of Germany ; the war between them is more than a war of conflicting armies and interests : it is a war of conflicting ideals of life, between Rousseau's individualism and Treitschke's Imperialism : it is a struggle between opposite national temperaments. Germany will doubtless continue her steady plod towards her ideals by one road or another, whichever roads may be closed to her by the present war ; but if ever her road takes her across the path of the French in any sphere, the age-long struggle is sure to be renewed. Germany will ever elaborate her machinery while all the time ignoring the human factor, which,

like our accidental impunity in a chemical synthesis, entirely alters the expected result ; France will continue that incomparable regime of gaiety and exactness which is the very salt of a healthy humanity.

And what can we learn from France? She holds out to us the same lesson as Germany does—the lesson of high seriousness and strenuous honesty of thought, of the need for a clear vision and a definite ideal, and of continuous endeavour along a well-considered line of advance. There was a time, as we shall see presently, when England also felt herself equal to such efforts ; but of late we have grown too diffusive, too slack and undisciplined, too frivolous, in fact, though the word sounds strange when applied to such a solemn people, to be able to face such exacting conceptions of public duty with cheerfulness. We have tasted of the pleasures of drift and of a short-sighted enjoyment of the present ; and concentrated effort of any kind, especially concentrated thinking, is repugnant, and may soon be impossible, to us. This, then, is the tonic of French example. Just as a couple of French soldiers once called Goethe from his bed, so France to-day calls, not Germany—Germany is fully awake—but England, whose bed is always so warm and soft, so cosy and comfortable, to be up and doing, and, above all, thinking : hard.



### THIRD ESSAY

#### *THE SLAVS AND THEIR PROBLEMS*

IN our manœuvring round the fixed point of the war we have dealt with the same set of facts from the points of view of the two most continuously and temperamentally opposed of the combatants—the Germans and the French. And now from Pan-Germanism we turn to Pan-Slavism, although at the beginning we must bear in mind that there is not the same unity, either of problem or of purpose, among the Slavs as there is among the Germans. Whereas German aims and ambitions are clear, concrete, and urgent, Slav aspirations are vaguer, more temperamental, and less material. Perhaps that is why the Germans profess to dread the Slav oncoming, to regard their civilization as inferior to their own ; it is certainly different.

It is thus much more difficult to deal with pan-Slavism, especially as so many Slav peoples are still subject peoples or else only of late emerged from subjection, than it was with the far compacter and more definite problems of Germany. Indeed, although I propose to give some slight thread of history to keep my subject from breaking utterly loose, yet for the most part I shall aim at giving rather an impression of the sort of people the Slavs have struck me as being, in so far as I have been among them, because I feel this most strongly : we must know all we can about the sort of people who are helping us. Already

we have seen what the French stand for in the advance of humanity. We have also decided that it is necessary to study our German enemy if we are to cope with him successfully. Far more necessary, therefore, it seems to me, is it that we should get to know all we can of a people with whom we are as a rule but little in touch, about whom, therefore, we know little and have yet heard much that is misleading without being able to criticize what we hear, but who will ultimately have a greater effect than any other force in that vortex of forces we call the war. Slav ideals as much as Slav arms will influence the settlement profoundly. The war is likely to lead to a Slav leadership of Europe. How important it is, therefore, to get to know what the Slavs are like, what they stand for in the civilization of Europe, what, in the war of cultures which is behind, yet not far behind, all the actual field-fighting, Slavism really connotes. And in dealing with this vast and urgent problem I have preferred, or rather been compelled by ignorance, to rely more on my personal impressions than on my reading.

The Germans are a compact but only recently united people in a Slav pocket ; the French are a still more compact people, who owe much of their achievement to highly centralized institutions dating back for centuries. But when we turn to the outer mass—the Slav pocket itself—what do we find? A people with common characteristics indeed, but also great diversities ; a people who stretch over vast tracts from the Arctic Circle right down into the deep-blue waters of the sub-tropical 'Mediterranean ; a people who include races as widely separated in space and characteristics as Poles and Serbians, Bohemians and Bulgars, Russians and Slovenians : too diverse almost for even the Sokol movement to unite.

Now, in the presence of such diversity, what unifying principle can we discern? Well, once more we

are driven back on religion for the net which, as in the miraculous draught of fishes, holds the mass together.

When we were considering the break-up of Rome we found that the eastern flank of Christendom was protected for over a thousand years by Constantinople, the real bulwark of the west ; and it is this same Constantinople which really holds the Slavs together still, even though to-day it is the Turkish capital, and the head of the Christians there is almost powerless to resist the arbitrary exactions of the Mohammedans, who hold him responsible for the good behaviour of all the Christians throughout Turkey.

Thus we have to take up our story at the point when the thousand years of Byzantine Christianity is succeeded by the five centuries of Moslem rule—at the point when St. Sophia ceases to be a Basilica and becomes a Mosque. Nor is the value of this starting-point vitiated by the fact that, of the western Slavs, the Poles are Roman Catholics ; while it was among their Slav neighbours, the Bohemians, that John Huss, influenced by our own Wicliffe, was preaching the Reformation before Luther, and suffering martyrdom at the Council of Constance, saving Luther from a similar fate at Worms, perhaps, by the horror excited throughout Europe at the treachery of the Emperor, who let the Church burn Huss. I ought to say also that, though the Russian Church exists apart from that of Constantinople, although its language is a Russian which bears about the same relation to modern Russian that the English of the Old Testament bears to modern English, yet in its essentials it is at one with the Eastern Church, at one in its married priests, in its rejection of images and mechanical music, and in the intimacy of the relation between priest and people which arises out of the use of the common everyday language for the purposes of worship instead of a separate

liturgical language like the Latin of the Church of Rome.

I am glad to have hit on this beginning to my subject, for not only is the eastern form of Christianity the unifying fact of the Slavs as a whole, but also the word "religion" strikes the dominant note in the Slav character, particularly in Russia. The Russian alphabet is modelled on the Greek, which came to Russia with Byzantine Christianity. Similarly Russian civilization is to-day organized on as definitely Christian a basis as was our own manorial system in the Middle Ages.

So much by way of preliminary. We have just seen both the distribution and the unification of the Slavs. Let us now see what the downfall of the eastern capital in 1453 meant to these peoples. To Europe generally it meant first the Renaissance, then the Reformation. But what did it mean to the Slavs?

To the Balkan Slavs it meant submergence, though not extinction. I have already mentioned the Patriarch of Constantinople, and described him as existing, as it were, on sufferance in the Turkish capital. The Turks have a very rudimentary notion of the State. With them State and Church are one. They, too, like the old Jews, are theocratic, with God as their actual King and the Sultan simply as His Viceroy. When, therefore, they had to control a conquered people of another faith than their own, the only machinery they could think of for the purpose was the organization which already held the Slavs together as a single people—the Eastern Church; and thus the Head of the Eastern Church, the Patriarch of Constantinople, became to the Turks a sort of Vicegerent or Viceroy of Christ on earth, subject to the Sultan, who was Vicegerent of Allah.

During the last five centuries, then, the Balkan Christians have been living a curiously unsatisfying

life. Buried, overrun, and controlled, though not ruled, by a people whose one achievement and only strength lies in its fanatical fighting power, the Christian Slavs of the Balkans have lived in a state of unprogressive, suspended animation, never really crushed by the Turks, but so sealed up and cut off from the progressive Christian world beyond the frontiers of Turkey that they have fallen centuries behind Western Europe in civilization, yet without ever losing either their religion or their sense of nationality.

In speaking of Islam I pointed out what a stimulating effect the faith produced on backward and savage races by the clear-cut creed and positive rules of conduct which Mohammed had provided in the Koran. Now, however, we see that when Islam comes into contact with a higher civilization and a more spiritual faith than its own, it cannot kill that faith and civilization, but merely checks its development. Progress is unknown in Mohammedan countries, either among the True Believers or among their subject peoples.

So much for the Balkan Slavs. What about the rest?

Now the Turks were not content with having conquered merely the Balkans. Crossing the Danube and streaming north-west, they made as though they would reach the Baltic and thus drive a wedge in between Eastern and Western Christendom—between Germany and Russia that is to say. But they were stopped and turned back by a Slav people that has now long ceased to exist as an independent State—the Poles.

In 1683 John Sobieski, King of Poland, defeated and drove back the Turks who were threatening Vienna, and so rendered Christendom the same service as Charlemagne nine hundred years earlier. But how different was his reward! Whereas Charle-

magne was made Emperor and ruler over the West, Poland was cut up again and again. Whenever its neighbours, from the days of Frederick the Great onwards, wished to expand, they did so at the expense of a Polish province or two. And thus for over a century Poland was subject to a series of vivisections, until at last there is nothing left of the original State. In its stead we find three portions : one German, one Austrian, and one Russian.

Probably the Poles themselves are partly to blame for this disaster. They were a very quarrelsome and disunited people, and their internal dissensions, of course, helped their enemies to dismember their native land. It might not, indeed, be fanciful to describe them as a people of over-developed artistic temperament : too individual and impatient of restraint, too eager for self-expression ever to be welded into a great national whole ; too Greek in temper to become a solid Imperial people like the Romans or the English. At any rate, the world is full of Polish artists to-day, and we may well imagine that Paderewski, the De Reszkes, and many others one could name are only the fine flower and perfect realization of a national yearning after artistic expression. I had once a Polish friend whose name—of eleven letters—had long been famous in the annals of his race. He came over to England to look into our educational system, and when he was going back he made me an offer. He was anxious to start a school in Poland for the sons of nobles and influential men, and he asked me whether I would go with him and help him in his work. I asked what he would wish me to teach, and I was rather surprised at his reply. He said he was extremely anxious to introduce Association football among his fellow-countrymen, and since in those days I was still a player he wanted me to teach the boys football—not Rugby, which he regarded as too much

of a hurly-burly, nor yet cricket, which was too individualized, but Association, which seemed to him to combine in ideal proportions the usually conflicting excellences of individual brilliancy and combined action. I refused, since in those days I was head of a school of my own ; but sometimes I regret that I did not go over and help him nurture among his beloved people—he always spoke of them, though divided among three Empires, as one—the spirit of united action and individual sacrifice which he saw immanent in our national winter game, and which was so necessary, he felt, to Polish unity. Elsewhere, also, on the Continent I have come across the same belief in football. I have already mentioned French Rugby teams, and, apart altogether from the big international matches which English teams play regularly now in so many European centres, one finds attempts at football throughout Germany—solemn pot-shotting at goal on gravel grounds through blazing Sunday afternoons in mid-August. When one comes back to England in September and finds oneself in the presence once more of the machinery of the League and the Southern League, and the Second Division and Heaven knows what, one wonders whether even in our sports we have not killed the spirit by over-developing the medium, and thus allowed materialism again to conquer, as is our national weakness in most things. One sees the point of the German caricature in which the English soldier is saying, “ Well, if we can’t beat the Germans in battle we can always beat them at football ! ”

So much for the curiously related subjects of Poland and football. Napoleon’s idea of a reinstated Poland, followed as it has been by the offer of Nicholas II almost exactly a hundred years later, is only an act of reparation to a State who, with all her faults, has done much for the cause of

Christendom, and suffered much at the hands of her neighbours. Perhaps, in view of her past, it will be as well for the new Poland to exist under the protection of the one Empire of the three who is of the same Slav race and has had the courage to say, "*Peccavi*" and to offer atonement and reparation to the people it has so grievously wronged in the past. Certainly Prussian treatment of Poland has been unsympathetic. The Prussian believes in making himself felt, and his training is such that even if he believed in conciliation and peaceful absorption he would find himself debarred, by the effects of two centuries of drill-sergeantry and forty years of master-morality, from practising methods milder than those he has always used on peoples under his rule. Austria is kinder, it is true, but nevertheless Austria is German. So only Russia remains as the protector Poland would certainly need in a reconstituted Europe.

Let us turn now to Bohemia, a corner of Europe which, as far as I can judge, seems to have been almost entirely forgotten during the present struggle. Yet it, too, has played its part in its day in the affairs of Europe. "Good King Wenceslas" was King of Bohemia; his statue stands on the bridge over the Moldau at Prague. It was from the blind King of Bohemia, who was killed at Crécy in 1346, that the Prince of Wales took the three feathers which form his badge. Anne of Bohemia was wife to our English King Richard II, and may have been instrumental in bringing back Lollardry to her own people from England (I believe that ancient copies of Wicliffe's works have been found in the libraries of Prague). Huss I have already spoken about; but the Reformation owes yet another step to Bohemia, because it was the driving out of the Elector Palatine and his wife, "the Winter Queen," as she was called (she was a daughter of James I of England, sister to



Charles I, and mother of Prince Rupert, of our own Civil War; at Heidelberg still stand the remnants of the wing of the castle which her husband prepared for her)—it was their flight from Prague that started the Thirty Years War and which had such terrible effects in Germany, as we have already seen.

Yet, in spite of this close connection with European events of the first importance, in spite even of its repeated connection with our own history, we have forgotten altogether about Bohemia, and when we hear of the Czechs we wonder who they are. We may have heard of Austrian regiments surrounding and shooting down Czech regiments, and thereupon have probably concluded that the Czech is some sort of Russian, and so turn to see what the German *Emden*, who sank £2,000,000 worth of ships in her three months as commerce-raider, or a British aeroplane has been doing. But the Czechs are not Russians; they are Bohemians.

Now, why should these people have been forgotten when other Slav peoples are exciting so much interest? I think it is because they are in a German pocket, just as the Germans in their turn are now in a Slav pocket; in other words, the Czechs are so surrounded by the Pan-Germans—i.e. Germany on one side, Austria on the other—that they seem almost stifled, just as the Germans proclaim that unless they hack their way through they also will be stifled by the Pan-Slavic mass of the Russians and their wing the Balkan peoples. Yet I think there may be an end of the oblivion under which the Czechs suffer. If the silent Hradchin, that desolate range of palaces on the heights above the shallow Moldau at Prague, should become the temporary seat of the Austrian Government in the course of the varying fortunes of war, the interest of Europe in Prague will revive.

I was in Prague a few years ago, and well

remember the impression of quiet and grave beauty that this ancient capital of Bohemia made on me. I had gone from Dresden up the Elbe by steamer as far as Bodenbach—and there is no finer or cheaper holiday stretch of river in Europe than that of the Elbe through Saxon Switzerland ; it beats the Rhine hollow—and then on by train. At the hotel I found that the porter had perfected himself in English. He had learned it from textbooks and the study of our best literature. His diction was therefore slow and distinguished, and he was delighted with the opportunity of practice which I gave him. “For,” he said, “we are but rarely visited. On the one hand, our language presents difficulties ; on the other, our town is liable to demonstrations.”

To demonstrations ! I felt rather curious and looked out for demonstrations next day ; and I found them sure enough, since the next day happened to be the birthday of the Emperor of Austria, and the great black and yellow flag of Austria was to be seen streaming from the highest windows almost to the pavement of many a house. But for every black and yellow flag thus pushed forth another was flown of Bohemian colours—red and white, as long and still more striking. Thus the battle of nationality waved up and down the streets throughout the day, while when the evening closed in and the most beautiful light effects I ever remember to have seen began to displace the rioting colour of the afternoon, the regimental bands, which climbed with many a halt the steep streets towards the Hradchin, playing wherever they halted (the big drum, I noticed, was mounted on a light horse-trailer), were followed by crowds more critical than enthusiastic, until at last, at the top of the long climb, the band played its final tune in front of the Cardinal’s palace, and his Eminence came out on the balcony from the inner light of the dining-room and bowed his thanks. There

at last the band seemed to find full appreciation, because the Emperor is most closely linked with the Holy See ; he is still the shadowy sovereign of that ancient Empire whose rule was the joint rule of Pope and Emperor. And thus it was that the Cardinal left his soup to bow to the band while the Prague folk looked quizzically on. But if one happens to be in Carlsbad or Marienbad on the Emperor's birthday one will see nothing but black and yellow. Red and white is nowhere to be seen. Yet both are in Bohemia. But they are also, alas ! denationalized, cosmopolitanized, and given over to the disgusting cure of obesity. They "cure" the alimentary canal of Europe after its too heavy dinners, and tone it up to conquer the winter series as far as possible—and such a process needs calm : the red and white of a forgotten nationality would be out of place in an area consecrated to such great purposes.

In my further journeying through Prague I came to yet another evidence of the intensity with which the Bohemian—think of actually being a Bohemian by birth !—fights for his national existence. I came to the Czech Theatre—a noble building on the banks of the Moldau which costs the Bohemian Government I know not how many thousands a year, probably from five to ten. And its maintenance is for one single purpose : to keep alive the Czech language at a literary standard, and, with that, the Czech nationality.

We have already seen the importance of language in the maintenance of nationality and the attempts of the Germans to kill alien tongues. We have also seen the place occupied by the theatre in foreign schemes of national well-being. When therefore we combine these two influences we can understand how the Bohemians regard their theatre. So far from being a mere place of amusement for an occasional evening, it represents their national existence, the

focus and altar of their patriotism. It is the shrine of Bohemia. It serves, indeed, the same purpose as a Welsh or Gaelic church, but with this difference : the Celts of Great Britain have no terrible alien pressure to resist ; they are free and welcome—nay, encouraged—to keep up their national language and literature. The Government pays grants for the teaching of Welsh in the schools ; it is the Celts' own fault if ever it dies down ; even the Irish are free to revive their ancient speech (in Dublin the streets are named both in Irish and in English) if they wish. But in Bohemia the tongue has to fight against authority, and recently the fight was carried, I believe, even into the command words of the Army. Thus we see that the theatre, so far from being at the other pole from the Church, comes nearer to it, perhaps, in the case of this Czech theatre than it has ever been since the days of Greece and the Miracle Plays of mediæval Europe.

Another point which struck me was the intensity of the Bohemian's admiration of the beauty of his capital. Whereas in the days of my visit the picture-postcards of German towns were as a rule crudely tinted photographs, those of Prague were either beautiful reproductions of water-colour drawings (I saw several artists working on new views during my stay) or else little etchings, or else photographs taken at night to show the effects of artificial light on familiar scenes—an idea which was developed with success several years later as regards London.

Now, surely a people with such a history and such capacities for the beautiful ought not to be ignored in the European settlement. What can be done for them I do not know ; I do not even know what they want. But I would give something to see the veil lifted from the face of Prague—and it ought to be possible to discover why she mourns.

Spruner's Historical Atlas shows Bohemia existing

as a Duchy in 843, when, as we saw, the division of Verdun split Charlemagne's Empire into three. At the same date there was no Austria, and the name of Vienna does not even figure on the map. For long Bohemia marched, border by border, with her northern Slav neighbour Poland. Later, however, Bohemia and Poland were separated by Silesia, which was originally a Polish province but became Austrian, and later, through the high-handedness of Frederick the Great, Prussian. Whether it would be possible so to reconstitute Poland as to take her borders all the way to Bohemia and thus lift Bohemia herself out of the German pocket, and so make her the western advance guard of Slavism, which would then stretch continuously eastward from Bohemian Carlsbad through Poland into Russia, and at the same time, for her protection, also to make her another vassal State of Russia, like reconstituted Poland, is more than I can say.

So, then, we must leave these two distinguished, artistic, but forgotten western Slav States with these words: It has been their fate as the frontiers of Slavdom to fall victims piecemeal to the encroachments of the Teutons from the west. How far they can and should be recovered from their present Teutonic holders is a very big question, for the settled rule of centuries—as, e.g., in the case of Pomerania, West Prussia, and Silesia—may well make fundamental changes in a people's outlook; and it would be as great a mistake now to dismember Germany in the interests of Spruner's maps of mediæval Europe as it was originally to dismember Poland herself. It would not only be a crime but—what is worse—also a blunder, since it would start an agitation for the retransference to Germany of provinces which, in the dim and distant past, were doubtless Polish, but which by long association with Germany by this time have become predominantly

German. Evidently some sort of provincial plebiscite is required, the sort of vote suggested during the Home Rule debates for our own Ulster counties, together perhaps with some such re-sorting of the various populations as has settled the religious troubles of Swiss cantons, where Roman Catholics and Protestants, once mixed, concentrated themselves by mutual agreement in specified districts. But whatever may be the upshot of the war as far as Poland is concerned, it should not be forgotten that Bohemia also is Slav, that she too has her troubles, and therefore her claim on the Allies. At present, all we can say is that it is perfectly easy to see why some Austrian regiments surrender so readily to the Russian forces. Austria feels the pull of the Slavs on her northern as well as on her southern frontiers; she is now paying the penalty of having grown at the expense of the Slavs by finding it increasingly difficult to keep the loyalty of the rapidly increasing Slav peoples under her rule when they are attracted by the success of their fellow-Slavs both in Russia and in the Balkans and yet sent to fight against them. The dominant race in an Empire built up of such a diversity of peoples as that of Austria must have a remarkably tough and quick digestion if the various peoples it swallows to increase its size are to be assimilated sufficiently to increase the power of the Imperial State and not to prove a source of weakness in the day of battle. And the Germans have no such power of assimilation; they tend, indeed, rather to be assimilated, as we have seen earlier.

Let us turn now from these northern Slavs that we have been dealing with, the Slavs to the north of Austria, to the less developed southern Slavs—those, namely, in the Balkans to the south of Austria, who have been the immediate cause of all the trouble.

When first the war broke out many people asked

me in amazement how it was that a little State like Serbia could set Europe by the ears as it has done. To clear up this difficulty I must now enlarge on what I said earlier about the Balkan Slavs.

We have already seen that these Slavs lived for centuries in a state of suspended animation, keeping alive as far as religion and nationality were concerned, but merely marking time while the rest of Christendom were marching along the path of civilization. So long as Turkey remained a solid Power south of the Danube these peoples had no chance ; but early in the nineteenth century the Turkish Empire—a merely militarist dominion without any claim to governing skill or statesmanship—began to break up, and gradually the Christian States of the Balkans, stimulated by the enthusiasm of the French Revolution, began to emerge either as independent nations or else as principalities more or less tributary to Turkey. We in England were, of course, most interested in the Greek struggle for independence because the Greeks were helped by Lord Byron, but we must not forget that this was only one State among several who were all working towards the same end—freedom from Turkey. This movement has continued from that day to this, and is even yet not finished.

Byron was not much impressed by the Greeks he helped ; indeed, he said—

For Greeks a blush, for Greece a tear,

or words to that effect ; and I must confess that the other Balkan peoples carried on their respective Wars of Liberation (at about the same date, be it noted, that Prussia was building up her strength in those wonderful years which succeeded her own War of Liberation) by methods not immeasurably superior to those of the Turks they were

fighting against. Nor should the impartial student wonder at that or blame them. It was not their fault that they had emerged in the nineteenth century with the ethics and morals of the sixteenth and seventeenth, that they had been effectively preserved from the decay of progress (as Nietzsche and Bernhardi would doubtless call it) by the all-pervading presence of militant Mohammedanism. But it is very much to the credit of the Balkan Slav States, and also an indication of the stimulating power of the French Revolution, that they emerged at all from the stagnation of an alien race and faith, the brutalizing effects of which cannot but have left their mark on the peoples who so bravely struggled free from it in the course of the nineteenth century.

Thus it comes to pass that the Serbians, the Bulgarians, and the others step on to our stage like young men who have somehow escaped the vigilance of the school attendance officer and thus missed all the advantages of compulsory Board School education. They are backward, but not therefore by any means necessarily dull or malevolent. They may be fierce and quick to act, but they are not therefore prejudiced against the learning and civilization of the more fortunately placed among their Christian neighbours. Indeed, the younger generation of South Slavs seem to be much ahead of our own schoolboys as regards political instincts. Recently, for example, the Bosnian school-children went on strike as a protest against the action of Austria. In the matter of appliances also the Balkan States are only too ready to avail themselves—as were the Japanese—of all that Western Europe can offer. I do not mean to suggest that Serbian ambulances or Bulgarian artillery are sixteenth or seventeenth or even nineteenth century organizations. What I had in mind was rather the way in which they used their forces, the steps they were prepared to take to secure their



ends. But all the edge of what I should have had to say six months ago has been taken off by the German invasion of Belgium. Beside the horrors of that deluge the acts of Serbia I must speak about are relatively mild. Nevertheless, in themselves, and not in comparison with the latest practices of German culture, these acts must be termed—well, at least as barbarous as the French massacre of St. Bartholomew, or the murders of Rizzio and Darnley in the history of Mary Queen of Scots. These are sixteenth-century events, and I have already described Serbia and the rest as sixteenth or seventeenth century in all but appliances. They have electric light, telephones, and machine guns, but they use them in a way that reminds us of the Tudors. Just as, however, in the matter of material they have become twentieth century with a vengeance, there is no reason to think that, now that they have finally shaken off the bondage of Turkey, they should not with equal quickness make up for lost time, and, taking a two-hundred-year leap, bring their ideas and methods into harmony with those of Western Europe—always excepting Germany, if we are to take her atrocities as representing her real character.

What, then, are the incidents I have in mind? They are incidents which are important not only as indicating the temper and present development of the Serbians, but also as starting perhaps, certainly strengthening, the national forward movement in Serbia which has meant so much to us all.

Some few years back high military officials broke into the sleeping apartments of the King and Queen of Serbia, murdered them, and threw their bodies out of the window, it is said with the knowledge if not the connivance of the Austrian Government. Then the conspirators invited a Serbian Prince who was at the time living at Geneva to take the throne. He did so, and as King Peter he showed himself a good deal

more national and far less inclined towards Austria than had his predecessor, Alexander. He can also be credited with having translated Mill's "Liberty" into Serbian, and with having fought for France in 1870.

Now this *coup d'état* was an undoubted act of violence, and for some three or four years Great Britain would have nothing to say to Serbia, just as the States refused to recognize Huerta in Mexico. But time brought kindlier feelings, and now we remember that Milton, our greatest poet after Shakespeare, advocated regicide; while among the Cavaliers (only about two hundred and fifty years ago, and when England was by no means a barbarous State), "Killing no Murder," a pamphlet advocating the assassination of Cromwell, was held to be merely loyalty to Charles II, who had offered a price for the Protector's head, of which, by the way, a photograph recently appeared in a daily paper. (Cromwell was dug up out of Westminster Abbey at the Restoration in 1660, hung in chains at Tyburn, and his head stuck on Temple Bar. There it stayed till it rotted, and blew down one night into the arms of a watchman. He kept it as a curiosity; hence the recent photograph with a wooden stake through the skull. Yet when we hear of a Turco carrying a dead German's head about with him in his knapsack, we murmur, "How barbarous!" We have travelled far indeed, so we think, in the last couple of centuries.) Perhaps "Arms and the Man," by Bernard Shaw, will help us to understand the Balkan character, with its curious contrasts and emotional facets. Anthony Hope has also made use of the fusion of modern and sixteenth-century civilizations which is to be found in the Balkans for his adventure stories, "The Prisoner of Zenda," and others. On the other hand, the poetry of a primitive people is still to be found among the Serbians—who lost all

their nobles in their fight against the Turks—and the bards and professional versifiers who tell the troops around the camp fires the stories of the great heroes of Old Serbia add to these ancient stories the stories of great deeds done in the three wars which Serbia—in utter defiance of the theories of Mr. Norman Angell—has carried or is carrying through, because she is still able to provide food and war material.

Nor must we forget that these Slav peoples are also religious enthusiasts. The Bulgarians, who in temper seem to be more the Prussians of the Balkans than are the Serbians, were buoyed up in their war against Turkey by the prospect of singing once more a *Te Deum* in the Hagia Sofia at Constantinople. That in itself would have been a sufficient reward. They might have marched out of the city after the *Te Deum* with the feeling that they had won. It reminds one of Henry of Navarre and his famous "Paris is worth a Mass." Unfortunately, the Bulgarians were never in a position to test the relative strength of their motives as regards Constantinople, for they never reached the Turkish capital; and Germany, at any rate, and perhaps others were glad to have the Turk's head still in chancery on the Bosphorus, since Turkey's body had been dismembered and the balance of Europe entirely destroyed in consequence. (The entry of Turkey into the war makes no vital difference except to herself. She began too late and too obviously under German coercion to stampede Islam into a religious war. Islam was already fighting for France, England, and Russia; and thus Turkey failed to do the damage which the Germans hoped for when they forced her to fight.)

It speaks well for the future of the Balkans that the present difficulties of Serbia have not been too strong a temptation for Bulgaria, whom Serbia de-

feated, when the creation of an artificial Albania in the interests of Austria had cut Serbia off from the Adriatic and compelled her to try to get to the Ægean—an enterprise in which she had to meet the rivalry of her former ally. As to the future we can say nothing—as to what Roumania, Greece, and Italy may or may not do during the present war, and how the Balkans may settle down in the near future. I may, however, have suggested something in the way of a line along which one may be able to think oneself into the future; that is all a historian can claim to do.

The road is now clear for dealing with the greatest by far of all the Slav States, Holy Russia herself; and as I think of her vast extent, her endless variety, her limitless resources, my courage almost fails me. But I hope to steer my way through by following the principle I laid down at the beginning of this essay—to write as far as I can from personal experience, and to keep just a thread of history to serve as a controlling line through the intricacies of my subject.

Another name for Russia is Muscovy, for a Russian a Muscovite. These names remind us of the days when Moscow, and not that new city on the Neva which we used to call St. Petersburg, but which we are now gradually learning to call Petrograd, was the capital of Russia.

Into the still further past, into the days when Kieff was the capital and civilization was entering Russia from Sweden under leaders like Rurik, and Christianity was working northwards from Constantinople, we need not plunge.

When I went through the private apartments of the Czars at Tsarske Selo, I saw many intimate details which were strongly contrasted with the gorgeousness of the State apartments upstairs. But one relic impressed me above all the others. This

was a long iron rod, sharpened at one end, which I was allowed to hold for a moment. It was the rod of Ivan the Terrible, who ruled in Moscow during the reign of our Queen Elizabeth—indeed, ambassadors of Elizabeth visited him. And it was his fierce custom (he was probably mad) to thrust this spear of his through the feet of those who stood before him with evil tidings. The spear reminded me of Saul in his darker moods. But it also reminded me how remote from our own day was the Russia of even three centuries back.

Three hundred years ago the present ruling House, the House of Romanoff, came to the throne. They were nobles or Boyars among fellow-nobles, and ruled much as the early French kings ruled, as first among equals. (The word "peer" means, indeed, equal with the King.) But we need not trouble ourselves with the greater part of these three centuries during which Russia is more Asiatic than European in its mode of life, save, of course, that it is Christian. It is not, indeed, until our own Dutch William is well planted on the English throne and using English armies against his powerful foe and neighbour in Holland, Louis XIV, that Russia becomes important to us ; but from that moment its importance is continually and rapidly increasing.

In the reign of William III, then, the people of Chatham had a surprise : nothing less than the appearance of a Russian Czar in their midst, moving about the dockyards and building slips, and not only studying but also helping in the construction of the wooden walls of Old England. This unconventional potentate, who liked to go about as a common workman, was, of course, Peter the Great—a very different figure from Frederick the Great, whose service to his State was almost all of it fighting service, whereas Peter gave most of his energies to dragging his people into contact with Western Europe when he

had once broken the bonds which held them down. These bonds were of two sorts—hostile Powers to the north and south of his inland State round Moscow, and a strong aristocracy entrenched behind immemorial custom and with all the immobility of the East in their souls. It was against both these that Peter threw himself with an energy that was bound to shear its way through all obstacles.

He broke the power of Sweden under Charles XII, who was trying to play the part on the mainland played in the Thirty Years War by his predecessor, Gustavus Adolphus, and in breaking the Swedish monopoly of the Baltic he brought Russia within measurable distance of West Europe. He also broke the power of the Cossacks to the south of him and so reached out another hand to the Black Sea.

But this stretching of the Russian giant as he awoke from his age-long sleep under the blows of the violent Peter was a painful process. His limbs cracked and he groaned aloud, but still Peter kept on. When his nobles refused to trim their beards and cut their hair in accordance with the fashion Peter had brought home with him from abroad, Peter sheared them like so many sheep, it is said, with his own hands. At any rate, before long he had turned his sleepy, indolent, Oriental Court of Moscow into a very passable imitation of the jack-bootedness of Berlin, for just as Prussia was influenced by France, so was Russia influenced in her turn by Prussia.

But so long as Russia remained buried in verst after verst of plainland she would never really awaken. At Moscow, with its many gilded churches and its bells and beauty, it was always afternoon; a more bracing capital was required.

Moreover, Peter had grasped the importance of the sea on his visits to Holland and England—both at that time, of course, under one ruler, William of

Orange. Hence the great move north-eastwards which so dismayed his nobles. Peter had determined on a new capital, and had fixed on the swamps of the Neva (of all places) as the site : a cold and dreary region, frozen hard for months at a time—and so very different from Moscow.

Nevertheless, there was no gainsaying the ardent Czar, and the work proceeded—the titanic work of building a new capital on a swamp with a violent river hurling down blocks and sheets of ice from the great inland sea, Ladoga, that it drains, and bursting its banks as often as it had been confined for a space. Even to-day this city of Peter suffers from the violence of the winter frosts, and is being continually rebuilt in consequence. But nothing daunted Peter, and bit by bit the city rose. When I was there in 1912 I made a point of seeing the log hut Peter put up, the first house of the new capital, and the house in which he lived during the long progress of the work. It is now covered over, and visited in the same spirit as that other spot which has been covered over by the costliest church in Europe—the point on a canal side where the enlightened Alexander II, the liberator of the Serfs, was assassinated in 1881.

Peter was then a greedy worker at the actual details as well as at the great outlines of domestic progress. He had dragged his people to the sea which let in the world of the West ; albeit he had nothing better to offer them on the coast than an artificial town, planted by main force on the swampy banks of a turbulent river, and of so provisional a nature that even to-day it looks unfinished and Wild West-like, with roughly cobbled streets and many wooden houses, which, during the hot days I spent there, blazed up night after night and lit the sky first in one direction and then in another, till I grew quite used to the nightly glare. Among the buildings thus

destroyed, by the way, happened to be a wooden theatre put up by Peter on an island.

Peter's death is of a piece with his life. On the banks of the Neva—at last restrained by heavy stone copings, though still groaning and crunching with ice-floes every spring—stands a group in bronze representing this most human of all autocrats struggling out of the water with a half-drowned sailor. It was from the exhaustion of this rescue that Peter died. Can we wonder at the Russians calling their Czar "Little Father"?

Another extremely interesting statue in Peter's City is that of an Empress—the remarkable woman who took up and carried on the work of Peter after a period of over thirty years' confusion had greatly weakened what Peter had accomplished. This woman was Catherine II, and she is quite as worthy of being called "the Great" as Peter himself. There she stands alone on her pedestal, while round the base are grouped the men she befriended, and among them the one-eyed Potiomkin about whom Bernard Shaw wrote his amusing little piece "Great Catherine."

It was with Catherine that German influence grew strongest. She was German, and her husband, Paul, had died somewhat mysteriously; nevertheless it was she and Potiomkin who started Russia on that road of territorial expansion which she has continued to tread ever since.

This expansion was all with one more or less conscious object. Like Imperial Germany, Russia had come too late into European politics, and was too deeply embedded in the land, too far from the sea to gain the easy and ample access to the open ocean which her future demanded. It is true that Peter had thrust one arm north and planted St. Petersburg and another south to Odessa, but a look at the map shows how useless these two centres really are from the point of view of sea power. The Baltic is a



land-locked sheet with the key in the hands of Denmark. The Black Sea is doubly—nay, trebly locked : by the Bosphorus, then by the Dardanelles, both in Turkish hands, and lastly—for the Dardanelles lead only into the land-locked Mediterranean—by England at Gibraltar and Suez.

Nor did the capture of Finland at a later date from Sweden improve matters, for Finland is simply a Baltic State. All that the capture of Finland (a Magyar or Hunnish State in origin) really did for Russia was to give her a constitutional people to subdue and to earn her the enmity of Sweden, who had lost the province. That is why Sweden, though neutral, is somewhat well disposed towards Germany in the present war. At any rate, in view of the Czar's wise liberality towards Poland, it is not perhaps expecting too much to hope that he will find himself able to make a similar offer to his enlightened Finnish subjects.

As regards the Black Sea outlet Russia has been no more fortunate. She has fought two wars in this region, and in neither has she been successful in overcoming the difficulties of her position and reaching freely even the land-locked Mediterranean.

First there was the Crimea, in which she had to fight the allied armies of France and England. Then again in 1877 Russia fought a second time for a way out of the Black Sea. She championed—as she has done ever since—the Christian subjects of Turkey, that stands astride both the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles like a Colossus, which, though crumbling, has never yet actually fallen.

In this war Europe left Turkey to her fate at first, but, much to the surprise of Europe, Turkey was well able to look after herself. When, however, Russia really "got going," the days of Constantinople were numbered. Then it was that Europe intervened.

The Jingo song of the great MacDermott crystallized the opinion of England thus :—

We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do,  
 We've got the men, we've got the ships, we've got the  
 money too ;  
 We've fought the Bear before, and we'll fight the Bear again,  
 But the Russians shall not have Constantinople.

This, expressed rather more formally, was the opinion of the Congress at Berlin, at which the Treaty of Berlin was signed in 1878, and from which Disraeli and the young Lord Cranborne—afterwards Lord Salisbury—brought us “peace with honour”—words to be seen among the wreaths which decorate Lord Beaconsfield's statue in Parliament Square on Primrose Day. It is this Treaty which states quite clearly the position of the various Balkan States—e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, provinces of Old Serbia, as protectorates of Austro-Hungary ; it is this Treaty, therefore, which Austria tore up, with the connivance of Germany, when she assumed full sovereignty over these provinces after the overthrow of Abdul Hamid by the Young Turk party—an act which marks, as we have seen already, the first stage in the developments which led to the present war.

The only European port Russia has which stands on the open ocean is therefore Archangel, but that is terribly tucked away behind the North Cape, and, moreover, frozen half the year. Nevertheless it is an open way, and the legend of Cossacks coming through Archangel and thence through England to the battlefields of France shows that an eye to sea routes and constructive imagination are not so decayed among us as many people thought.

So much, then, for Russia's position in Europe—a position like Germany's, only worse, since Germany has at least a North Sea coast. Fortunately, how-

ever, Russia possesses what Germany has not got—a way out, a hinterland, and it is in the use she makes of her hinterland, Siberia, that the interest next centres.

I remember a cartoon in *Punch* which represented Britannia as looking up at the starry skies. The drawing was called "What of the Night?"; but in the next issue a letter appeared in the paper calling attention to a serious error in the composition: the Great Bear had been put in upside down. *Punch* was quick to reply, "Of course, because Russia has recently suffered a reverse in Asia." Those were the days when the Bear and the Lion faced each other on the Khyber Pass—the gap in our North-West Indian frontier; of Abdur Rahman, Ameer of Afghanistan; of expeditions galore, from Roberts' march to Kandahar to—well, I really forget the rest, I am ashamed to say.

Foiled in Central Asia and in her projects on India—if ever she had any—Russia was driven still farther east, and determined on the heroic scheme of the Trans-Siberian Railway, which was to be Russia's road, she hoped, to the warm water, her deliverance from bondage to Denmark, Turkey, England, and the ice of Archangel. Unfortunately, however, no Russian Pacific port is really ice-free, and so Russia schemed to get one a good deal farther south. This she managed when she became possessed of Port Arthur, on the Yellow Sea. Soon this valuable port was linked up with the Trans-Siberian by a line running across Manchuria; and Russia was always showing a tendency to spread from that line over the face of the Chinese province through which it ran. Now the eastward extension of Russia had already disturbed Japan, and Japan began to feel still more uneasy and angry when Russia seemed to be preparing to absorb Manchuria even than she had felt when Russia, Germany, and France had combined to

force her to forgo the fruits of her victory in China in 1895 and Russia had kept Port Arthur for herself. By 1897, then, Russia was established at Port Arthur, but with a very jealous, alert, and injured neighbour watching her intently across the water—Japan. When, therefore, Russia ventured still farther south and began to get concessions in the woods and forests of the queer peninsula of Korea, which hangs like a great tongue between Japan and China, Japan felt that she was bound to interfere. For a Russian occupation of Korea would have shut Japanese influence out of China, and reduced Japan to the position of a string of unimportant islands off the coast of Asia. Japan felt towards Korea, indeed, exactly as we have always felt towards Belgium. She felt herself bound, that is to say, to fight in the interest of her continental *vis-à-vis*; and thus we arrive at the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, in which Japan enjoyed much the same sort of success as Turkey had enjoyed against Russia at the beginning of the war of 1877—i.e. Russia was beaten before she really “got going.” Her long line of railway served her wonderfully, but nevertheless she fought at a tremendous disadvantage by reason of her distance from her base. A Japanese naval officer to whom I was once talking told me that the Japanese used often to wonder how ever the Russians managed to deal with their returned empties, for the rail was largely a single one, and it was not till he himself travelled over the rail after the war that he realized what the Russians had done. He said that there were no returned empties, or rather that much of the rolling-stock was never sent back at all, but was used at the rail-head for huts, sheds, even firewood. Such is the incidental waste of war.

During the war, England, the ally of Japan, and France, the ally of Russia, kept the ring, and therefore prevented the war from spreading to Europe.

Nevertheless, the effects of the war were very widespread. The Japanese had won largely because of their philosophic contempt for death. Like the Chinese, the Japanese hold their life cheap, and are willing to lay it down at the command of their Emperor-Pope, "ancestored of the gods," and himself God Incarnate, the Mikado. Nor are the Russians any the less ready to lay down their lives for the Little Father in a cause which stirs them, but, as I heard Professor Vinogradoff say at Sheffield recently, the Russians did not believe in the war, and public support of it was not strong enough to overcome the drawbacks of bureaucratic inefficiency. It was, moreover, a war for seaports. When, therefore, the Russian fleet was destroyed and Port Arthur taken, Russia could gain nothing by going on with the fight. Once more, then, Russia was repulsed from the warm water.

But the effect of the war went farther even than that. We felt the effect in India, where the Oriental agitator was encouraged by the defeat of a great European Power by a small Eastern Empire. And of course Russia felt the effect even more severely than we did.

It is remarkable how war has modified the course of internal development in Russia. The Crimea ultimately gave freedom to the serfs, and the Japanese War gave Russia the beginnings of a Constitution—the Duma—but not until a great revolutionary movement had first worked itself out, a movement which was stormy enough to drive the Czar for safety on to his yacht, and which reached its climax in the shooting of Father Gapon. I came back from Russia in 1912 with English managers of Russian factories, who told me some grim tales of the period of internal trouble which succeeded the war.

Having failed in her Far East project, Russia turned once more to the question of an outlet. At

an earlier date she seemed to have thought that a port on the Persian Gulf might suit her purpose, and there were rumours that she might try to make of Koweit a second Port Arthur. But Lord Curzon, at the time Viceroy of India, undertook a viceregal voyage in the Persian Gulf, and thus advertised the fact of England's predominant interest in those waters.

So there for the moment the matter rests. In 1907 England and Russia squared their differences, and Russia established a controlling influence in northern Persia, while we looked more particularly over the south. But nothing was said or done about a warm-water port for Russia, and it is quite easy to imagine that so long as Russia does not get the outlet she needs she will never be really settled. Will she now get down to Constantinople, I wonder.

For the time being, however, the question rests, and Russia has formed an alliance with her earlier enemy, Japan. As we also are allied with Japan a sort of informal Triplice has sprung up, and of course the Triple Entente in Europe includes also France; and thus we see how it is that five Powers are linked together against the Germans, and also how it is that Japan has seized the occasion of the present war to wrest from Germany the Chinese port she once held. Japan has a long memory, and we cannot wonder that she has taken this opportunity of avenging herself on the Power which had organized the intervention that robbed Japan of the fruits of her triumph over China in 1895.

We have thus brought the Russian story up to date. Russia again turns westward; she once more faces the problems of her European position now that her hinterland or Siberian ventures have proved, for the time being at least, abortive.

In dealing with Germany and France I was careful to show, as best I could in so short a space, not

only the steps by which they had reached their present position but also the sort of ideas and aims fostered in each ; and now that we have arrived at the end of our slight historical survey of Russia it is still more important to consider what are the ideas Russia believes in, what are the objects (other than the merely political objects we have been dealing with) that she keeps in view.

I said that the Japanese War was responsible for a great deal—first for revolution, then for the Duma, and, lastly, perhaps even for the change of heart which has been the most striking feature of the present war. While this war has revealed Germany as a ruthless destroyer, it has shown to the world and to the Russians themselves that, given a great and intelligible cause, Russia can come together in a way which nobody who remembers the Japanese fiasco—and the Germans with their blinkered minds have remembered it so tenaciously that they seem to have had no room for any other notion about Russia—could believe to be possible.

The spirit of Russia has at last managed, it would seem, to infuse itself into the Government ; and the Czar has apparently been able to use the new and wonderful unity of his people for freeing himself and the State, to some extent at least, from the bonds of bureaucracy. German methods, which have been more or less dominant since the days of Catherine the Great, seem to be falling into discredit and Slav methods seem to be taking their place. Thus Peter's city was renamed Petrograd. The Czar, by offering reconstitution and Home Rule to Poland, has taken only another step in the direction he took when he bade his Minister reintroduce into the Duma a Bill for the restoration of the Polish language after the Bill had been rejected by the ex-bureaucrats who constitute the Council of the Empire. Again the Czar's personal note comes

out clearly, I think, also in the following rescript after a journey through Russia to his Minister of Finance :—

“To my profound sorrow I had to contemplate the mournful picture of popular debility, household distress, neglected business—the inevitable consequence of an intemperate life—and occasionally the spectacle of popular enterprises deprived at critical moments of pecuniary aid in the form of properly organized and accessible credit. . . . I have come to the firm conviction that the duty lies upon me, before God and Russia, to introduce into the management of the State finances and the economic problems of the country fundamental reforms for the welfare of my beloved people.”

As a result of this pronouncement the State is no longer to make revenue out of the sale of spirits, and the Russian Army is to avoid the drunkenness of the German. It is not so long since English Chancellors of the Exchequer used to say that if the Treasury were low England could always drink herself solvent—that is to say, send up the revenue from Customs and Excise to the necessary height. Even to-day we spend £160,000,000 every year on drink, so we see how much in earnest the Czar must have been when he sacrificed a similar revenue in Russia.

Lastly, the words of the Czar in his proclamation on the Austrian declaration of war strike an unexpectedly fine note—I mean a personal and by no means an official note, for he speaks of Russia going into the war with the Sword in her hand and the Cross in her heart—quite Russian, quite on the lines of his people’s own thoughts, the very antithesis of the Kaiser’s variants on the *Ego et Rex meus* (“I and the good old God above”) theme, in Whose Name Germans are to emulate those evanescent Huns of Attila. Such is the difference



between the War Lord of the Germans and the Little Father of Holy Russia, who, on the three-hundredth anniversary of the accession of his house, made a pious pilgrimage to the relatively humble tombs and centres which are the real origins of the Imperial line.

Let us turn now from the Czar himself to a great Russian, Paul Vinogradoff, who has been a Professor in Oxford for many years past. Recently he was offered a ministerial post in Russia—for Russia never renounces her claims to the services of Russians abroad: a denaturalized Russian is almost an apostate from the national faith—but he declined, since at that time he felt himself more advanced than the other members of the Ministry; but as soon as war broke out he became a strong supporter of the Government, although to all intents and purposes he is a political refugee in our midst. This is how he speaks of his fellow-Russians:—

“These simple people cling to a belief that there is something else in God’s world besides toil and greed; they flock towards the light and find it in the justification of their human craving for peace and mercy. For the Russian peoples have the Christian virtue of patience in suffering; their pity for the poor and oppressed is more than an occasional manifestation of individual feeling—it is deeply rooted in national psychology. Their frame of mind has been scorned as fit for slaves! It is a case where the learning of philosophers is put to shame by the insight of the simple-minded.

“A book like that of General von Bernhardi would be impossible in Russia. If anybody were to publish it, it would not only fall flat but would earn its author the reputation of a bloodhound.”

Recently I heard this scholar, who speaks such a different language from that of the holders of so many German professorial chairs, lecture in Sheffield,

and I gained from his lecture still further information with regard to the state of Russia. Eighty per cent. of the 170 millions of Russians are, he said, peasants ; hence the fine material of the Russian Army as noticed by Sir Ian Hamilton, who was with the Japanese Headquarter Staff in 1905.

The Cossacks are yeoman farmers, holding their land on a feudal tenure ; but even the peasants are smallholders, and thus in a far better position than is our own landless agricultural labourer, dependent as he is on his employer's wages for his entire subsistence. Then, again, each Russian peasant community enjoys such an amount of local self-government that it might be said that every village in Russia enjoys home rule, whereas we have seen that in Germany only the great towns enjoy it, and in England, as we well know, nobody enjoys it.

Thus when we hear of England as the land of liberty and Russia as the land of oppression we have to ask : In what sense are these terms used ? Who enjoys most opportunities of getting his own way—the Englishman with a vote he has a chance of using in a vague and complicated general election once every five years or so, but who is bound hand and foot by ground-landlords, leases, and a hundred and one other shackles, or the Russian, who is largely his own master on his own land, co-operates freely and extensively with his fellow peasant-proprietors in communal and farming enterprises, and may even have a vote for a Duma representative—if he wishes to use it ? It is thus quite arguable that Russia with her self-governing village communities is the most free country in Europe in all essentials. Indeed, while in these respects Russia enjoys all the healthy freedom of the mediæval manor, she has also managed to secure many of the benefits of an industrial system without suffering from the evils of Industrialism to anything like the same extent as that

to which England is still suffering, and from which Germany escaped only by giving careful thought to every step she took.

M. Vinogradoff was also hopeful as to the future of the Central Government. By a joint effort of the Ministry of Justice and the Universities, the Law Courts were reformed in the "glorious 'Sixties," and he sees no reason why the Bureaucracy should not be similarly reformed—and with the Bureaucracy also the Police organization, which often works unfairly in rural districts. He sees also in the giving of honours to Jewish soldiers of distinguished service a prospect of full citizenship for Jews in Russia.

Leaving now the words of the Czar and the scholar, let me give the experiences of a humble traveller. The first contact I had with Russia was distinctly bureaucratic. I, with all the others who had just reached the frontier, had to stand waiting by my baggage while my passport was examined; and at St. Petersburg, again, the same passport was carried off to the police by the porter of the Evangelical hospice in which I stayed. But once these formalities were past, I found myself free to go where I would. I have already mentioned some of my wanderings. Now I propose to describe those only which have a bearing on the character of the Russians. The streets are of course full of instruction. One realizes in them how different the Russian officer is from the German and the Russian parish priest from the Roman Catholic. Both officers and priests are to be seen out shopping with their wives, the officers in uniform and often carrying parcels, the priests in wide, long-sleeved robes of black, deep blue, or dark purple and hair as long as their wives'. The churches too, with their wonderful unaccompanied singing—a great *Te Deum* on the Czarevitch's birthday in the Kazan Cathedral, for example—their ikons, their devout crowds; the droshky-drivers, with their

Oriental habit of bargaining ; the high prices everywhere (the rouble of over two shillings goes about as far as a shilling in England) ; the way one can get in, if properly guided, to galleries and museums which are closed for cleaning (I shall never forget how the workmen and attendants in the Hermitage Gallery handled the masterpieces, standing two or three deep on the floor while the walls were being cleaned ; if we wished to see a picture which stood behind some others they moved those which were in the way almost as if they had been prints in a portfolio) ; the effect of perpetual sunlight produced by the light-blue glass in the Nicholas II Memorial Cathedral ; the bells and the sunsets ; the vast barges filled with logs ; the gilded spire of the Admiralty building and of the Peter-Paul Fortress church opposite it on the other bank of the Neva ; the perfectly English crowd of boys and girls ogling each other in the Embankment Gardens—all had their significance to the visitor who came across them for the first time.

The places of amusement were still more full of interest to me. From the fashionable open-air orchestra promenade, supper-room suburb of Petro-pavlovsk, where the crowd made the band play Tchaikovsky instead of Wagner at the outbreak of the war, to the People's Palace at the back of that harmless old Bastile, the Peter-Paul Fortress, I wandered, continually learning. The People's Palace was a wonderful place. I paid, I think, about sixpence—the admission ticket bore a tax for the poor—and that amount made me free of the whole place. I could walk round the open-air orchestra or go into the theatre where Russian opera was being performed. Perhaps the biggest surprise I ever had in my life was when I saw opera-glasses lying about loose in the racks behind the seats in this theatre for the use of the audience. In some theatres in England managers tried a sixpence-in-the-slot opera-

glass arrangement for a time, but I think it has been discontinued, possibly because the leakage in glasses was greater than the flow of sixpences.

To a Russian, however, national opera is a sort of religion, and it would be almost sacrilege to carry off one of the vessels or instruments of the service.

But my most illuminating experience was when I saw the Czar. He had arranged to review the Cadets—a sort of Boy Scouts body, which goes back, I believe, to the days of Peter the Great—and he came by water from Peterhof. The bridges were closed while he passed and the river kept clear. The crowd near the review ground was so great that although the policeman coolly took us out and placed us in front of people already in position (I felt terribly apologetic, but the people whose view we shut out seemed to take it as a matter of course), yet we saw practically nothing. So we decided to go down to the river and see the Czar return. Of course the embankment for some hundred yards on either side of the landing-stage was closed; nevertheless a sprinkling of people, chiefly women and children, were allowed along the pavement to prevent the area from looking bare, and, apparently because we were foreigners and looked harmless enough, we were allowed to join this sprinkling. There were of course plenty of soldiers and police, many of them in plain clothes, but so long as we did not stand with our toes overhanging the kerbstone they said nothing. Every now and then, however, a spectator would draw back an inch or two at some official's request. While we waited, a tug, with a barge in tow, came under the bridge, hooting loudly. Immediately a couple of police boats put off to order her back. In explaining to my companion what was going on, I happened to point once or twice; whereupon a workman (in appearance) came

up and said something to me—what, I knew not. My companion looked a trifle serious, and a bystander said that I had been told not to point. I laughed, whereupon the disguised policemen round about, and the man who had spoken to me, laughed also. I was relieved at that, for if you laugh at a policeman in Germany you only make matters worse. Then, turning to my companion, I said I would put my hands in my pockets for fear I should unintentionally be making more signals, for such the police evidently took my pointing to be, but my companion said I had better not, because once the police had noticed me they might think I had bombs in my pockets. So, like an awkward actor or a boy reciting a poem, I did not for once know what to do with my hands.

Soon after this the space filled up with naval officers in white summer uniforms, and the Czar came along. I had expected that he would have driven up to the landing-stage and just passed quickly into the boat ; but instead of that, he strolled leisurely out through the gates of, I think, the Marble Palace, with four Cossack officers before him, his son by his side and two of his daughters immediately behind him, then a group of secretaries and officials. Now I had thought that after all the precautions the police had taken nobody would have had the slightest chance of getting near the Czar. What was my surprise, therefore, to see a woman and a girl of about fourteen dart off the pavement some six yards from me and run quickly up to the Czar, kneel down, and hand him a couple of notes. He took them quietly and gently, handed them to an official, and passed on.

The police made a rush—the presence of the Czar seemed to have hypnotized them : that is the only way in which I can account for their letting the two petitioners through. Now, however, to make up for

their slackness, several of them took hold of the couple, and—I was watching closely all the time—simply led them back without any signs of violence or anger to the pavement. The women were, of course, agitated, and the Czar's daughters looked round more than once at the group they made. But the point that impressed me was the homeliness and the gentleness of it all, the 'Little Father' actually among his children. The dropping of butt-ends on toes which came too far forward, rough handling, lack of consideration, seemed almost impossible to imagine in the scene as I remembered it. Indeed, if it had all been arranged for a film producer it could not have been more pleasant. The film-producer would probably have demanded a good deal more heightening of the effect in the removal of the petitioners at any rate.

I was told afterwards that petitions of this description are as a rule for the better education of the petitioner's children, and that they are almost always granted. The petitioners are taken to the police-station, told that they have been indiscreet, because others might come with bombs instead of petitions, and then let go. Such was Russia as far as I saw it in 1912, the centenary of its triumph over Napoleon.

Russians paying a visit to England are equally surprised. I well remember a couple asking me where the State Theatre, the State Opera, and the State Orchestra of Sheffield were to be found. One of the most objectionable sights in English towns was, in their opinion, the display of sets of grinning false teeth in the dentists' shops. Decayed teeth are almost unknown in Russia; the Russians have not reached so far along the path of civilization as the false tooth.

My Russian friends went to such theatres as we have in Sheffield, and reported that our players were



good, but that our plays were naught. They went to hear the "1812" Symphony played in a music-hall, but came out when attendants behind the scenes fired off revolvers. "They used firearms," they reported. Still more shocked were they when the Parks Committee fired off bombs during an open-air performance of the same symphony, and then put the finishing touch by calling them scenic effects. (And yet we profess to feel horror at atrocities !)

How, then, are we to sum up the strange people whose calendar is just fourteen days behind our own, but whose civilization is in many ways in advance of our own ; what lesson can we draw from them?

Professor Vinogradoff described the Russians as crusaders, and I think that enthusiasm in a great cause, which the term "crusader" implies, is a notable characteristic of the Russians. They are a people of temperament and fervour, whereas their allies, the French, are a people of intellect and form, with the courage of their convictions by way of motive power. If the Frenchman embodies Reason, the Russian embodies Faith. The alliance is thus an alliance of the intellectual and the spiritual, with tenacity, the British bulldog, on the doorstep, not worried overmuch by ideas, ideals, Art, and all those moulding forces, which, unfortunately, he would rather leave to his Allies.

The Russian temperament expresses itself in many forms : in religion, in eternal argument, in conspiracy—read Joseph Conrad's "Under Western Eyes"—and secret societies, in music, in dancing, in fiction ; and the intense emotional and imaginative force of the race, working towards expression in these so diverse media, has given to Europe the most wonderful imaginative art and literature of the last thirty years, while as for Russian music and Russian ballet, they are as much at home to-day and as welcome in London and Paris as they are in their



native land. We have seen how readily the Art Theatre at Moscow took up Gordon Craig's work ; we have to admire the thoroughness of its whole year of rehearsal before his " Hamlet " was given to the public. We have but to turn to the works of Dostoieffsky (Laurence Irving's " Unwritten Law " was based on one of his novels, " Crime and Punishment " ), Pushkin, Tourguénieff, and Tolstoy, to see the Russian great in fiction ; to Verestchagin, in painting ; Mendeléeff and Metchnikoff in science ; Pavlova in dancing ; Tchertkoff in drama ; and Lydia Yavoska, who has recently brought Tolstoy's " Anna Keranina " round the provinces, and whose list of acted parts throws that of English actresses quite into the shade, in the art of the actor.

And thus when we are faced with the fact of an alliance with a people so vast, so gifted, so spiritual, in many ways so different from ourselves, we are forced to admit that we have much to learn, many prejudices to fight down, and many misconceptions to set right. We find that the Russians speak of themselves and their future in the same tone of guarded hopefulness as is to be found among the Americans. Both are alike, indeed, in this, that both are citizens of new and rapidly developing States in which growing pains are a healthy sign. In 1913, for instance, Russia's revenue was thirty millions more than it had been in 1912, yet without any increase in taxation.

This, then, should be England's attitude : a desire to understand as fully as may be the point of view of the Russians ; to enter as fully as possible into their hopes and aspirations. And if it seems difficult for us to cast ourselves back into the ages of faith and the days of the crusaders, with their contempt for death, we must remember that we have lost as well as gained by our longer experience and greater development. But perhaps the best thing Russia

has to teach us is the truth of that fine French saying—a saying which no Brandenburger could accept: “Let me but make the songs of a people, I care not who makes their laws.”

The Russians have preserved right into the twentieth century much of the spiritual and social beauty of the age of faith; they are still in many ways mediæval, and the most absorbing question with respect to them is this: Can they transform the co-operative social ideas of the Middle Ages into effective twentieth-century organizations of similar type? Can they turn the Christian Syndicalism of the Middle Ages into the Industrial Syndicalism of these latter days without having to repeat all the blind gropings of the period of experimentation: the nineteenth-century empirical formulæ of *laissez-faire*, individualism, the “dismal science,” competitive capitalism, trades unionism, Socialism, and the general strike? If they can short-circuit their evolution by avoiding, or at any rate minimizing, these deviations, they will have done more for themselves and humanity than perhaps they realize, for they will have kept intact the communal spirit which we West Europeans with our more roundabout pioneering have lost and are now trying hard to recover. The remarkable power they have shown of self-reform in the matter of the vodka monopoly—which used to bring to the Government a quarter of its revenue—is a bright augury. A people which can petition its ruler to make Prohibition permanent after only a few weeks’ experience of its benefits as a purely temporary measure is a people which can go both far and fast, and need not necessarily tread the painful path of experimental failure which has been the lot of its Western neighbours.

## FOURTH ESSAY

### *ENGLAND AND SEA POWER*

I HAVE now given my final twist to the kaleidoscope, and the familiar elements of the European situation are now in their last grouping : we are to look finally at the war from over the water, from the standpoint of our right little, tight little island.

And a lucky thing it is for us that our country is an island, although there are obvious drawbacks to our good fortune. The sea protects us from invasion, but it also protects us from the invasion of ideas and of experiences that we ought not to miss. We live on an island, and so we have become insular. Our security is so great that we are apt to take it for granted, and to forget that even in our case also it is true that the strong man armed guards his house only until a stronger than he appears. Our mind is so given up to trade and commerce and material prosperity that we are apt to forget how unstable a basis that affords by itself for national greatness.

And all the pomps of yesterday  
Are one with Nineveh and Tyre—

Tyre, the great trading city of antiquity, which left nothing by which we may remember her save a purple dye and the tradition that once she was very rich. As we shall see presently, we are not from time

immemorial a purely trading and manufacturing nation. Even when Napoleon called us a "nation of shopkeepers" we were less given over to money-making than we are to-day, and we were far better prepared to fight for our own cause than we are now, when our belief in the power of money has grown so great that it has made us rely on a hireling or mercenary army, whereas among our continental neighbours—and rivals—military service is a duty of citizenship. Carthage, the daughter of Tyre, fell because of her belief in the power of the purse to buy fighting men. Now I do not suggest that this fate is likely to overtake us. For, as I have already said, we are still, in spite of the corruption of four generations of industrialism and *laissez-faire*, by no means a purely money-grubbing people, and, fortunately, our mercenaries are men of our own race, who do our fighting for other motives than merely the shilling a day we pay them. Yet the Germans, who regard killing as a stern and high State duty and not a matter of wage-earning, excuse themselves for occasional cruelty to English prisoners by calling them "mercenary pigs who get money for their dirty work," and *Ulk* makes an English soldier ask a French and a Belgian why they fight if they are not paid to do so. But of course the great thing—to our minds—is that we never use the word "mercenary"; we use the word "professional" instead, and that makes all the difference in the world, and puts everything quite right. What possible objections can any one have to a professional army? All professions are respectable, and thus we avoid a horrid term by burrowing our head ostrich-like into the depths of a new word, and what we no longer see no longer exists.

The origin of our mercenary system ought, nevertheless, to be understood. Nearly all our fighting has been overseas, and foreign service is a matter

of furthering national policy rather than of national defence. Moreover, the Feudal vassals' service of forty days a year was so short as to be useless in foreign war; hence the substitution of Scutage, or shield money, for actual service, and the hiring of soldiers who would fight as long as they were paid with the Scutage of the Feudal tenants. Thus arose the idea of the regular or professional soldier; and to-day the Territorials have to volunteer specially for foreign service, so different is it from home defence, whereas abroad the one is simply an extension of the other—the Germans kept off a French invasion by holding a line in France itself, for example.

The Ironsides of Cromwell—religious enthusiasts to a man though they were—were nevertheless hired professional soldiers; and our present Army is the direct descendant of Cromwell's troops: the Coldstreams were originally one of Monk's regiments, which was kept together when the rest of the New Model Army was disbanded.

Until the outbreak of war recruiting was always brisk when trade was bad and vice versa. Busy employers disliked the disturbance to work caused by Territorial organizations, and, in short, the drill-sergeant had to go into the labour market to hire fighting men. As a youth I often talked to these sergeants in Trafalgar Square, and learnt from them much of the prospects and pleasures of Army life but nothing of my duty to King and country. And that is and must be the normal line of argument: the man-killing trade has its attractions and compensations, as has also the ox-killing trade. If public opinion is beginning to recoil from that terrible mixture of warfare and business which we call Kruppism, it may also begin to feel uneasy about making the sternest duty of the citizen into a paid business. Kruppism lets down its alien enemy employers, as witness the "disappointment" of Antwerp

by the German firm, which will ultimately have to choose which master it will really serve : Fatherland or Mammon. All armament firms are in this dilemma ; and no State can rely safely on purchase either of men or material for self-protection.

If Australia and New Zealand, Labour-governed colonies though they are, have turned from military professionalism to a system of universal service, it would be as well for us to investigate their reasons for the change—which leaves unchanged their fighting spirit.

In that illuminating book “ Seems So ” it appears that our fishing population have a real feeling of duty towards naval service. Our continental neighbours, burdened as they are by the constant anxieties of their land frontiers and what is brewing beyond them, see us rather lazy, pleasure-loving, not inclined to think too hard, undeveloped in all the higher activities of public life, caring but little for even our own mighty masterpieces of art and literature (whereas English classics pile the German bookstalls—Tauchnitz and all our cheap series) ; they see us unable to appreciate and develop the best that is produced by the exceptional men now among us ; slack, indifferent for the most part to higher interests, but mighty keen on football, fishing, pigeon-flying, films, and reading *John Bull*, *London Opinion*, *Chips*, *Tips*, and the *Funny Wonder* ; and yet, withal, and in spite of our many-sided neglectfulness, so secure, so unworried, that those hard-working peoples across the North Sea whose national perils keep them in a state of such terrible all-round efficiency can hardly retain their resentment at the difference of their fate. With a great price they have bought security ; but we, lolling at ease right across the German trade routes, are free-born, and, like so many fortunates who enter this world with silver spoons in their mouths, are apt to be deficient in a sense of

reality and to be ignorant and indeed careless of the way in which those who are born to toil and sorrow live. Even the little fact that our drivers keep to the left while all over the Continent drivers keep to the right must seem almost a piece of arrogance to the foreigner. Our ease and security have been assured us by one saving piece of common-sense, and yet of so obvious a nature that I hesitate to take credit even for that. We seized quite early upon the idea that the sea is our real frontier, and we worked out and applied this idea early enough in European history to reap the benefit of our policy in the windfall of outer regions which still remained to be appropriated. This lucky circumstance, combined with the fact that England lies in the centre of the world's land masses and therefore focuses their trade—London is the fulcrum of the world's money market—has given us both our Empire and our tremendous prosperity. Yet we must remember that we neither towed England into its present latitude and longitude nor did we throw stones into the sea till it emerged. No, "*Britain at Heaven's command*" arose from out the azure main," and was given not only a charter, but a population, who have come, therefore, to regard themselves as God's Englishmen, so well looked after by Providence that there is no need for them to worry about anything whatsoever, since we too are a Chosen People.

The idea of ruling the waves occurred to us quite early. In the fourteenth century, while the Middle Ages were still flourishing, Edward III married a Flemish or Belgian princess, Philippa of Hainault, and so drew the two countries together—and not even so far back as that for the first time. Nor was the tie a merely dynastic one : it was commercial also. The peace enjoyed by insular England—a kingdom already firmly united under one King—was so profound that the sheep, most helpless of animals

in war-time, flourished here, and we exported raw wool as Australia does to-day. And we exported it to the West Riding of the Middle Ages, which happened to be Belgium. Now the currency system of those days was very defective, and so, to minimize disputes and facilitate trade, Edward III had the rose-noble struck for circulation in both countries, since, besides being King of England, he was also Marquis of Antwerp. On one side of this coin we see the King bearing the arms of England on his shield and standing in a ship. So, according to the rose-noble of about 1340, England was already ruling the waves.

England's interest in Belgium was so keen in those days—Belgium bought up her wool—that she went to war on her behalf. France was threatening to attack Flanders, but an attack would have interrupted Flemish weaving, and so stopped our wool market ; hence the Hundred Years War, the glories of Crécy and Poitiers, Agincourt and Troyes. The French King was quite justified in calling Edward III the Wool Merchant, and to-day the most dignified seat in England after the thrones at Westminster and Canterbury is the Lord Chancellor's Woolsack in the House of Lords. Edward III's claim to the French Crown was merely a pretext to satisfy the scruples of the Flemings. They objected to fighting against the King of France. "Then I'll claim the French throne," said Edward III in effect, "so that in fighting for me you'll be fighting for the King of France and against a usurper."

It was by the expulsion of the English from France in the middle of the fifteenth century (just about the date of the fall of Constantinople to the Turks) that, as we have seen, a really united France arose—the creation of the miraculous Joan of Arc. And during the whole of the dark period which represents our punishment for Henry V's wicked war of



aggression, his cynical, short-sighted renewal of the Hundred Years War to switch his subjects' interest from home difficulties to foreign glories, and to stick his shaky house on the throne with the blood of the French—during the whole of the period succeeding his short success of Agincourt and the Troyes Treaty, the period, namely, of the Wars of the Roses, fought in the crashing dawn of the Middle Ages and the dawning light of the Renaissance, England's connexion with Belgium, Flanders, Burgundy—all three are one—was continued. John of Gaunt—"time-honoured Lancaster," as Shakespeare called him—was really John of Ghent, and was born in Ghent, while Margaret of York, the sister of Edward IV, Richard III, and "false, fleeting, perjur'd Clarence," and aunt to the princes murdered in the Tower, married our old friend Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. And so we could continue, did time permit. But we must draw on our seven-league boots and take a stride across the centuries until we come to Good Queen Bess.

Of course Elizabeth's reign to most people means the Armada. Now what were the facts about the Armada? Not Drake and his bowls, fine story though that is, and specially useful in these days when people are allowing the war to make an altogether excessive disturbance of their normal interests and activities. No, the facts are these: The Armada sailed for a week up-Channel with our volunteer Navy, stinted of ammunition and supplies, doing its best and cutting out stragglers now and then, but quite unable to check the stately passage of its foe. The Armada carried out its programme, anchored off Belgian shores, and prepared to take on board Parma's Spanish Army, now finished with its fighting in the Netherlands. There was no means in England's possession of preventing this vast array from carrying out its scheme to the letter, sailing,

that is to say, up the gaping estuary of the Thames (always the weak point in our national defence), landing Parma's army near London, taking the capital, and establishing forthwith the Inquisition and all "the devildoms of Spain." The danger came to us from the shores opposite our yawning Thames. Into that gaping orifice the Spaniards were going to drop a bitter pill indeed, and we had no means of either shutting our mouth or keeping off the Spaniards. So how did we save ourselves? By a mere ruse and the best luck in the world. We could not cripple the Spaniards, but we did manage to frighten them. Our eight fire-hulks, drifting at night before a freshening breeze, all ablaze, did what Howard of Effingham and all the sea-dogs of Elizabeth had been unable to do during the whole of the previous week: they managed to break the Armada. But not by strength—by panic alone. The sudden blaze and the fear of those drifting furnaces unnerved the Spaniards; they weighed anchor, cut cable, and drifted. "Then God blew upon them, and they were scattered," as Elizabeth's commemoration medal has it. And so England was saved; but let us not imagine that England was therefore either bold or strong. Elizabeth was throughout her reign anxious to keep in with Spain. Drake, Raleigh, and the rest went on their piratical raids at their own risk; the help Elizabeth gave to the Netherlands against the Spaniards was as secret as she could make it. Sir Philip Sidney, Zutphen, the singeing of the Spanish King's beard, the defeat of the Armada itself, though brilliant features in history written after the event, must have been spoken of under the national breath almost with fear and trembling at the time of their occurrence. Even the triumph over the Armada must have come to the English with a shock of surprised relief.

And James I was worse than Elizabeth. When

Raleigh came back after an unsuccessful attack on Spanish El Dorado, James executed him to please the Spaniards. In his son's day England's position on the seas was still more humiliating, and the unfortunate business of Ship-money was a real and honest attempt on Charles I's part to make England safe at sea. Read the story of Lord Wimbledon's expedition to Cadiz. Think of the Algerine pirates—the ancestors of the French Turcos who are fighting so fiercely in the present war—ravaging the coasts of England and carrying off stout English peasants as slaves to Algiers. Yet such was the case, and so many were the victims that prayers were being continually offered up for their deliverance and collections taken for their ransom. Yet even in these depths of naval impotence the Stuarts claimed that foreign ships meeting ours in the Channel should lower their main sail so as not to blanket our craft.

But this hollow claim gave place to something more substantial when Cromwell found himself at the head of affairs. Though tried almost beyond human endurance by the difficulties of his impossible position as military dictator of England, he nevertheless laid the first foundations of our naval power by his Navigation Act. This Act was aimed at the Dutch, who held in Cromwell's day the position we hold to-day—that, namely, of the world's carriers. The Dutch had developed their sea power early in their struggle with Spain in the fifteen hundreds, since it was only by sea that Spain could reach her Netherland possessions. Hence the rise of the Beggars as described in Motley's great book, and the subsequent sea power of Holland, with her widely extended colonies as a reward—in South Africa, in North America ("Rip Van Winkle" is an American, not a Dutch, story, remember), in South America (Dutch Guiana), in India, in the East Indies;

and so on. This little people were great at sea—their Dutch East India Company was the greatest corporation of the time ; and in those days we felt towards the Dutch much as the Germans feel in these days towards us. Hence all manner of contemptuous terms in our language—"Dutch metal," "Dutch courage," "Double Dutch," "You're a Dutchman."

In matters of commerce the fault of the Dutch  
Is in giving too little and asking too much.

Nowadays, of course, when Holland has ceased to be our rival, and become simply a State with a past and a number of picturesque old towns, our feelings have altered, and "my dear old Dutch" has become a music-hall costermonger's term of endearment. But in the days of Cromwell the Dutch were terrible people. They had succeeded to the sea power of their ancient foes, the Spaniards, and it needed courage in Cromwell to defy them. Yet the challenge was thrown down : the Navigation Act was passed, and the struggle began.

Now the policy of the Navigation Act was to prevent any goods from entering England unless they came in the ships either of the country producing the goods or else in English bottoms—i.e. the Dutch carriers were ruled out of all but the direct Dutch-English trade. The immediate effect of this Act was, of course, a considerable scarcity of imported articles, since the usual carriers had been warned off. But this scarcity was intentional and expected ; it was, in fact, the very lever that Cromwell had determined to use for the forcing on of our English fleet, and his policy succeeded. The demand for English shipping to replace the Dutch grew so urgent that before long English ships were sailing every sea and the Dutch had been ousted.

As, moreover, merchant shipping grew naval power had to be increased—a relatively easy business in these days, when every ship was armed for self-defence, or, if circumstances warranted, for attack. But the Dutch did not let the Navigation Act pass unchallenged, and we come, therefore, on a series of fights which continue beyond Cromwell's time into the reign of Charles II. "The Admiral's Broom," a fine song, tells a tale of the fights of those days between van Tromp and Blake: how van Tromp hoisted a broom to the masthead of his ship as a sign that he meant to sweep the English off the face of the seas; and how Blake replied with a whip, which, in the form of a pennant or streamer, is still to be found on every King's ship while in commission.

Cromwell had his reward. He was able at last to challenge the power of Spain—the first English ruler to do so, in spite of the defeat of the Armada sixty years earlier. Cromwell's sailors, Penn and Venables, seized the Spanish island of Jamaica, which thus appears as the first on our list of conquered overseas possessions. England's power abroad, by reason of her Navy, was also sufficient to enable Milton, Cromwell's Latin or Foreign Secretary, to intervene with effect in European politics, as, for instance, when Mazarin was persuaded to protect the Protestant Waldenses or Vaudois of Piedmont, on the border between France and Italy, from their lord, the Duke of Savoy. The sonnet of Milton beginning

Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones  
Lie whitening on the Alpine mountains cold,

is one of the finest dispatches of an English Foreign Secretary that we possess, although it brings the Deity into our affairs in quite a Kaiser-like style.

Many people are apt to contrast the Protectorate with the Restoration to the disadvantage of Charles II ; and in many ways the contrast needs no emphasis—it is great enough in itself.

But as regards sea matters there is more continuity than one might expect. Charles II was interested in the Navy ; and we may easily see in the diary of Pepys, Secretary to the Navy in Charles' day, that there was more conscientious work put into the upkeep of the Navy than one expects to find in the affairs of the Merry Monarch. It is true that the Dutch sailed up the Medway, thus once more emphasizing the weakness of our Thames estuary and especially the danger which threatens when the Netherlands are in the hands of a real Power. It is, unfortunately, also true that the Dutch ships contained English sailors, who shouted to their former companions on board the English vessels, " We used to fight for paper : now we fight for dollars "—words which suggest that if we *do* rely on mercenaries it is just as well to pay them in coin rather than in I.O.U.'s (a favourite currency with the Stuarts). Nevertheless it is easy to give too much importance to this raid—for it was nothing more. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that the Dutch lost to the English in Charles II's reign the valuable American port of New Amsterdam, which the English renamed New York after the King's brother, James, Duke of York, at that time an admiral, and later, of course, King James II. Other American colonies were added to our overseas possessions before Charles begged his courtiers to pardon him for being " so unconscionable a time in dying," namely Carolina, so called after Charles, and Pennsylvania, granted to the Quaker son of the conqueror of Jamaica.

But the rivalry of Holland ceases with the union of England and Holland under William of Orange

—the ideal King of Macaulay and the Orange Lodges of Belfast—and a longer-continued rivalry takes its place. This is the rivalry with France. In dealing with Louis XIV I mentioned that the chief reason why William III came to the throne was to get the help of England for the protection of Holland against the great French king, and that if William was spared from dying in the last ditch—as a matter of fact he died at Hampton Court after a fall from his horse, which had stumbled over a mole-hill (the Jacobites toasted “the little gentleman in the velvet coat” long after)—if William was spared that damp death, it was because he managed to secure England’s help in driving France out of the Netherlands.

Thus we see how often already we have fought on the Continent for the sake of keeping powerful States like Spain and France out of the Netherlands, and how, when Holland herself was powerful—but not for long—we had to fight her also.

We come now to the great war with France, which begins with William III and ends with Waterloo, a veritable second Hundred Years War, for, although we were not fighting every year of the century and more, yet the wars followed each other so fast that to all intents and purposes it is a century of fighting, with breathing spaces in between the rounds.

I have suggested by the use of that word “rounds” that this war was in the nature of a prize-fight. And so it was, for two reasons. There was a prize, and there was training for the contest. Leaving the prize to be considered later, let us look now into the nature of England’s training. This training was a regular system, and had a name. It was known as the Mercantile System; and the idea underlying the whole scheme was the same as that underlying the preparation of a boxer—a careful building-up of the forces by the regulation of every



side of the life. England, in short, went into training, and a training which had of necessity many of the Spartan features of our athlete's regime. Just as the individual is obliged to give up his luxuries, his cigarettes, his tea, and so forth, so was the nation called upon to sacrifice many of the pleasant things of life. In the words of Dr. Cunningham, England had to sacrifice Plenty for the sake of Power, and she made the sacrifice as willingly as Germany is making it to-day—the only point of difference in this respect between the England and the Germany of to-day being this, that the power England developed in the eighteenth century was so effective and her triumph so decisive in consequence that she has been saved from the necessity of keeping herself in training ever since, whereas Germany has never gone out of training, and could not even if she wanted to, since soldiering is the foundation of her existence. "Nothing succeeds like success" is in many ways a very misleading proverb; and the difficulty England is now experiencing in getting herself again into fighting trim after a century of ease is the other side of the proverb—the penalty of success.

Let us see, then, what the eighteenth century war-training of England consisted in. In the first place it was thorough and all-round, and reminds us somewhat of Germany's reorganization after Napoleon, with less emphasis on the educational and more on the material aspects of national strength.

The strengthening of the Navy was a chief point of the policy. Already Elizabeth had seen the necessity for keeping up the supply of the fishermen from whom the fighting sailors are drawn when she issued her political Lent proclamation—an ordinance which commanded the eating of fish in Lent and on Fridays, not because the eating of fish had any religious significance to Protestant Englishmen, but simply



because English fishermen must be kept employed in sufficient numbers to recruit the Navy. Similarly the timber needed for the "Hearts of Oak" was a matter of national concern, and landowners who possessed oak-trees on their estates had to remember that they held them, as it were, in trust for the nation, that any chopping down of even their own oaks for beams, or panelling, or furniture, or even choir-stalls or Yule-logs meant a possible weakening of the English Navy at a later date. Collingwood, Nelson's fellow-commander, used to go about with a pocketful of acorns and a sharp walking-stick, and wherever he thought he saw a good opportunity for sowing an oak he ran his stick into the soil and dropped an acorn into the hole. Similarly, farmers had to sow a certain breadth of land with the hemp, jute, flax and other crops required for sails and cordage, while warlike substances of foreign origin, like saltpetre, were brought in by favouring commercial treaties.

But men as well as material were required ; and men need not only work—Elizabeth had provided for that in her Poor Law measures as well as in her Lent ordinance—but also food. And to secure that food should never fail in England, even in time of war, agriculture was encouraged by every means in the power of the Government, and particularly by the payment of bounties on corn. This part of the Mercantile System, together with the general supervision of the national stamina and physique which it implied, forms, as we have already seen, one of the chief features of modern Germany.

We have now dealt with Material and Men. A third "M" remains, however, and this is Money. Now war cannot be fought on anything less solid than gold. It has occurred to the Germans to give up their wedding-rings and receive in exchange iron ones—stamped W II—simply because gold is so

precious to a State in time of war, as without it foreign payments become an impossibility.

To secure a great store of the gold a Government preparing for war so much believes in, all manner of curious measures were adopted by England. Trade was encouraged, for instance, with those States which wanted what we produced, but which produced articles which we could do without, either through national self-denial or national habit, or else because we produced them ourselves. The unfortunate country upon whom we unloaded our goods was thus unable to hand over her own products in return, and had, accordingly, to pay us in hard cash.

We got together a great deal of bullion by these and other means, and it was the gold of Pitt and of "perfidious Albion" which was the outstanding feature of the later years of this great war.

During the whole of this period the idea of trading with the enemy was so abhorrent to the patriotic English that it affected even their drinking habits: and can patriotism score a higher triumph than that? No English gentleman would allow champagne, burgundy, or cognac on his dinner-table—unless he were a recognized eccentric like Fox—but felt in honour bound to drink himself and his friends into gout for the benefit of our allies, the Portuguese, against our "natural enemy"—for such they were for the greater part of the century in English eyes—the French.

Thus England aimed patriotically and self-sacrificingly to make herself strong in war, and soon she began to score points in her contest with France.

Round 2 was finished by 1713; and England gained by it some valuable trade concessions as well as Gibraltar and several portions of North America. She could send one ship a year to Panama (and that ship served as a sort of landing-stage through which the cargoes of the many ships which accom-

panied her were passed and thus covered by the Treaty), and she had a slave monopoly. The wealth she drew from her South American trade was great, and the English grew as keen for more of it as a tiger which has tasted blood. Thus we come to the era of frenzied finance, of eighteenth-century company-promoting, of 'Change Alley and the South Sea Bubble—the South Sea being, of course, the Spanish Main or South Atlantic. Then, too, there was the curious Jenkins' Ear War. Jenkins was a smuggler—Free Trader he called himself—and his risky business consisted in trading on South American coasts other than that of Panama. When at last the Spaniards caught him they cut off his ear. Promptly Jenkins, who must have had a keen eye for effect, put his ear into a box, saying as he did so that he commended his soul to his God (apparently he feared that more than his ear was going to be cut off) and his cause to his country, and sailed for England. Thereupon Round 3 began.

But I do not propose to go through the match round by round. All I need say to finish off this commercial aspect of the war is that the two leading spirits in the struggle, both the elder Pitt (Chatham) and his second son, the younger Pitt, who fought Napoleon, were members of a family whose fortunes had been laid in commerce, and who represented throughout this period the rising commercial interest in England, as opposed to the old territorial Whig oligarchy, which had ruled ever since James II had been driven back again to Louis XIV. Inasmuch as the new party opposed the Whigs they were Tories, but the new Tories were very different from the old Jacobite Tories of the '15 and '45. The new were commercial and prepared to fight for commerce. The old were forlorn supporters of a lost cause, pathetic and futile. The spirit of old Governor Pitt, who carried on a risky business along the Indian coast

and came to England with the famous Pitt diamond hidden in a hollow in his boot-heel, inspired both his descendants and the party they led. From that day trade and commerce have not only been increasingly influential but also increasingly recognized in our Government, whereas in Germany the commercial man has still no recognized social or political status, however strong his indirect influence on affairs may be. Germany is still under the equivalent of our eighteenth-century Whig oligarchy.

In this lengthened struggle with France, England had a great advantage. Whereas France had land frontiers, with all their complications and anxieties, to worry her, England could concentrate on her one and only problem, the problem which Cromwell had been the first to tackle with effect, the problem of sea power (another instance of England's luck in being insular). Thus it was possible for England to keep France busy in Europe by helping her European enemies, and in this way to lessen the energy she could put into her Navy. Chatham showed real insight when he said that he would win an overseas Empire on the battlefields of Europe—just as Germany hopes to do to-day as a matter of fact. But whatever diversion we might create on the mainland, our real business was at sea. England's one safeguard lay, as it still lies, in her Navy; and in seeking first national security she found something else added unto her, namely, an Empire, and for this reason :—

To be really safe England must have a supremely powerful Navy—a Navy so strong that in time of war it is bound to win. Now when it has beaten hostile fleets, what is the consequence? This: that all the overseas possessions of the defeated State fall helpless prizes to the victor, for the simple reason that the Mother Country, having lost the security of

sea transit for her troops, cannot come to their assistance.

In China there is, I believe, an elaboration of the pastime of kite-flying which illustrates my point. Each kite-flier tries to get a hooked knife in the tail of his kite under the string of his rival's kite, and thus, sooner or later, bring the other kite to the ground. Now this was the game being played right throughout the eighteenth century. Each of the five West European nations—England, France, Spain, Portugal, and Holland—were flying colonies as kites with navy lines stretched across the various oceans, and since it was a matter of life or death for England to be stronger than any of the rest at sea—otherwise she could never have remained England at all—she was bound sooner or later to cut most of the rival connections and pick up the pieces for herself. The very names of our colonies tell us that ; we have already seen New Amsterdam become New York, but Quebec, Montreal, and Acadie—all obviously French—became ours through Wolfe (it was interesting to hear French-Canadian soldiers talking French in London to the Belgians) ; Tasmania, New Zealand, the Transvaal, Orange Free State—all obviously Dutch in origin—fell to us ; Goa, Trinidad, Natal, and others were obviously Spanish or Portuguese before they became ours—a finely mixed Empire for “that heterogeneous thing an Englishman,” as Defoe calls him, to rule. The principles of hydrostatics would seem to apply even to sea power. Once we had established an effective pressure in one area, that pressure was felt with equal force throughout the whole water surface available. Thus at the present time the pressure of our concentration in the North Sea is felt very much beyond the area of the German Ocean—to give it its Teutonic name.

Particularly clear is the effect of sea-power in the

later stages of this century-long struggle, the fight against Napoleon.

There is little doubt that Napoleon at the outset of his career dreamt of nothing less than the establishment of the world Empire which France had lost in the days before the Revolution. His earlier ventures were all out in the Levant, in Syria and in Egypt ; one of his earliest victories is the Battle of the Pyramids, for instance, and a Mohammedan servant attended him through his after-career. He also kept in touch with the Indian princes who were giving England trouble in the East. But Nelson's victory of the Nile quite stopped any idea he may have had of establishing an Oriental Empire. Indeed, even when he found himself thus restricted to the comparatively narrow field of Europe he still found that England blocked his way. She was the centre and paymaster of coalition after coalition. The English paid the foreigner to fight the French ; they would not fight themselves, except on sea. The gold of Pitt was his great enemy, so he determined on the invasion of England.

If on a clear day as one walks the Leas of Folkestone one looks across at the opposite coast of France, one may be able just to distinguish through glasses the shaft of a column on the cliffs above Boulogne. This is the column which marks the gathering together of the army of England, an army which was practised in rapid embarking and disembarking in flat-bottomed boats, and was intended to march on the capital from the coast of Kent. So confident was Napoleon of success that the medal he struck in anticipation of victory—a giant strangling a Triton—bore these words : "*Frappé à Londres.*" All these preparations, made openly within sight of our shores, raised our anger against Napoleon to fever heat, and our anger against "Kaiser Bill" is as nothing, if we may judge by the cartoons and caricatures of the

time, compared with our anger against the Corsican ogre. We put up those Cheshire-cheese-like Martello towers, which can still be seen dotting our south-eastern coast for miles (and which can now be hired for a very small sum from the War Office), and we cut a military canal along Romney Marsh from Hythe onwards, to stop any party which managed to get across the Channel. But our real defence then lay, as it does to-day, not in tower and ditch, but in our Navy, which in those days was playing the long, weary, watchful game which must ever be the part of a master-fleet in a naval war. Until Napoleon could secure the protection of the French and Spanish Navies, his proposed trip across the Channel was impossible. Once he could secure the command of the Channel, his way across would be as easy as it was for our force to reach Boulogne (!) in August 1914. But his fleet was shut up in the French and Spanish ports by Nelson's blockading fleets, and when, in obedience to Napoleon's imperative orders, they issued forth, they came out only for defeat and destruction at Trafalgar.

"At Trafalgar we fought for existence, at Waterloo only for victory," is a saying that contains much truth. The final loss of sea-power in 1805 quite destroyed Napoleon's hopes of a world Empire, and even made his position in Europe untenable in the long run, as we shall shortly see. Although the army he had gathered against England gave him the crowning victory of Austerlitz when moved against Austria, and although the dying Pitt said, "Roll up the map of Europe, it won't be wanted these twenty years," nevertheless the year 1805 saw a still vaster map rolled up by England before the eyes of France, and that was the map of the world.

In 1905 was held the St. Louis Exhibition. Now the real name of that big show was the Centenary of the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition, and thus we



are carried back again to 1805. And to what purpose? Simply to see Napoleon, unable any longer to get across the Atlantic for the protection of the remaining French possessions along the Mississippi from New Orleans to St. Louis (French names both), selling them to the United States and thus opening to the new Republic the door of the West and the way to the Pacific. England had thus cut the French colonial kite-string ; and Louisiana fluttered down into the hands, not of England but of her ex-colony the United States of America.

But sea power can not only hamstring, as it were, rival Empires, it can also put tremendous pressure on areas far beyond the range of the guns of the fleets which are its instruments.

Foiled in his direct attack on England, Napoleon conceived the desperate idea of ruining us by a trade boycott. The obvious way to bring low a mere nation of shopkeepers was to exclude their goods from European markets. This Napoleon attempted to carry out by issuing a couple of Decrees, one, significantly enough, from conquered Berlin, the other from conquered Milan. But it is easier to order the exclusion of goods than to enforce the order ; and the smuggling trade of England, chiefly through Heligoland, which we had taken in 1807, was enormous.

The Empress always had English stuffs in her wardrobes, and people said that even the French soldiers marched on English leather, so difficult and complex is the subject of contraband of war and trade in war-time. War is as likely now as then to stimulate English trade as to injure it.

But however ineffective Napoleon's decrees may have been, there was no doubt about the effectiveness of England's reply to them. This took the form of Orders in Council, instituting a blockade of European ports, and since England had the



supremacy at sea she was able to make this blockade effective. The results soon began to appear. Prices rose, and the various peoples who had at first looked upon the French as liberators and saviours from their own local tyrannies now began to regard the French in their turn as oppressors and tyrants, who were raising prices and making life unbearable. Thus is to be seen the beginning of popular movements against the French, and we ourselves helped on more particularly the popular movement in Spain. We sent Wellington out and fought the Peninsular War, which, in spite of the smallness of our numbers and the uncertainty of the support we received from the Spaniards and the Portuguese, proved in the long run the Achilles' heel of Napoleon's Empire, the back-door as it were to France (as Louis XIV also had seen Spain to be), through which enemies could creep while she was busy fighting across and along the Rhine ; the Ireland, or South Africa—according to German hopes—of Napoleon's French Empire.

While England was thus preparing to stab France from behind, Russia was growing restive under the pressure of the English blockade, and at last opened her ports again to English goods. Nobody was more popular in those days among us in England than the Czar. Such a breach in his plans, such defiance of his authority, was too serious a matter for Napoleon to ignore, and therefore he set about the impossible task of conquering Russia. Thus it was English sea power which, by creating, through blockade, a scarcity in Europe that Russia resented, drove Napoleon to his fate, which brought him up against those terrible fighters General January and General February when he had been burnt out of Moscow and had verst upon verst of snow to tramp through, with a hostile Germany waiting for him over the border at Leipsic.

We wonder how many English people who have

listened to the great Russian "1812" Symphony have realized why it was called "1812," and what our exact share in it is. How many may have thought that the numbers refer simply to the metre or rhythm in which it was written, some sort of extended 3 : 2 time, namely 18 : 12!

But whatever the defects—until the present war began to teach us—in our knowledge of 1812, most of us know something of 1815, for that is Waterloo year.

Now Waterloo was fought in Belgium, and thus we find English troops once more on Belgian soil, as they have been at least once a century ever since the days of Queen Elizabeth, to go no farther back than that, though of course we easily could. And our reason for our continued interest in Belgium is indeed one with the maintenance of our sea power. Although our very earliest relations with Belgium were chiefly trading, yet even in Edward III's day, as the rose-noble shows us, the idea of sea power had begun to take root in our minds and to link itself with Flanders, for those flat coasts opposite the gaping estuary of the Thames, once they have fallen into the hands of a powerful State, threaten the very heart of our land at its most vulnerable point. And thus again and again have we had to step in to free or help to free those coasts from the powerful foreigner. We have seen Elizabeth send help to the Dutch, who actually flooded their country against Spain under William the Silent; we have seen the Dutch themselves the powerful enemy whom we had to engage in the days of Cromwell and Charles II; again we saw William III bring in the power of England to keep the mightiest State of his time, the France of Louis XIV, out of the Netherlands, even though he had to die in the last ditch. (King Albert of Belgium has heroically paralleled his determination during the present war.) And

now we have seen England joining in the fight against France, led by Napoleon, because the French Revolution, Napoleon's motive-power, had boiled over into Belgium. Can we wonder, then, that when a new Power threatens Belgium to-day England pursues without hesitation her traditional policy? We have always guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium, we have fought for it again and again.

Belgium has thus been for centuries the cockpit of Europe.

But Pitt was just as reluctant to attack France as Mr. Asquith was reluctant to attack Germany. Pitt welcomed the French Revolution, not so much perhaps because he approved of its principles—he left that to Fox—as because it kept France busy with her own affairs and so left him free to do the one piece of work which most urgently needed doing in England at the time, and that was to organize the Industrial Revolution. Pitt fully expected, I believe, to devote his energies to internal reform, to guiding the great change which was coming over the land, just as during the past few years the statesmen of the present generation have been engaged in a belated attempt to patch up all the evil which that change has caused. If the French Revolution had not worked its way into the Netherlands and established itself there as the Batavian Republic, Cobbett would probably never have had an excuse for calling English manufacturing towns “hell-holes,” and foreigners would not now be able to wonder at the poorness of our public life and the wealth of false teeth in our shop-windows. But since the great cauldron of the Revolution could not be kept within the borders of France, there was nothing for it but once more wearily to shoulder the burden of war and bear it through to the bitter end in 1815.

Having sent Napoleon to our island of St. Helena, Europe could afford to rest and indulge in a certain

amount of reaction. England also was now as free as she could ever wish to be to indulge in her favourite pastime of money-making. There would be no need of soldiers or martial qualities for many a long day—if ever again. And so we all turned to our Tom-Tiddler's Ground and picked up gold and silver as fast as ever we could for the rest of the century, and, with a few vague misgivings that there might possibly be other sides to the national life, into the twentieth century also. I have already shown what a fearful mess England got into during this money-scramble, how all her traditions, all her old life, with its arts and amenities, disappeared, hoofed into the mud by the greed of gain which was then rampant, and how we are now emerging from the mud-heap, smirched, degraded, ignorant of our past, indifferent through whole areas of our land to the essentials of a civilized life—and yet withal (so blessed have we been by Nature) with our native powers not vitally impaired, and our determination, once it is enlightened, as this war will enlighten it, sufficiently tenacious to replace us on the great high-road which runs beside the trampled mud-heap, and to carry us along by forced marches till we are abreast of our Allies the French and the Russians in the things that really matter: we are now ahead of them in realized wealth, that is all.

But during this century of money-making England was by no means as deaf to the sorrows of struggling nationalities abroad as she was to the sorrows of struggling workpeople at home, where her ears were assailed with the wicked nonsense of *laissez-faire* economics and politics. Again and again during the nineteenth century England played the part of champion of oppressed peoples. Garibaldi was received with shouts in the streets of London, and indeed Palmerston was so busy recognizing new Governments all over the Continent, practically on

his own responsibility, that Queen Victoria and her German husband, Albert, who may be seen sitting in gold any day in Kensington Gardens, protested, since so many of their friends and relations were losing their crowns during the revolutionary period of 1848 with England's connivance and even encouragement. Gladstone continued this tradition, and *Punch* represented him once as a terrier looking up very fiercely at the word "Armenia." "Who said atrocities?" was the legend of the cartoon. Once when reading in the Gladstone library at Hawarden I came across a sumptuous edition of Blake that had been presented to Gladstone by the Armenians he had protected from the Turks, much as Milton had protected the Vaudois from the Duke of Savoy. It is shameful that in 1864 we did not protect Denmark from Prussia as we had undertaken to do in conjunction with France and Russia, and thus keep Prussia out of Schleswig-Holstein and its North Sea coast. The Naval Race with Germany was our punishment.

More recently England has been quieter in continental affairs. During the equilibrium of the Double and Triple Alliances England occupied a position of splendid isolation, to quote Lord Salisbury, a policy which, however, did not save her from the distrust and dislike of the continental Powers, who, fully armed, were watching each other day and night over their borders.

This policy of keeping ourselves to ourselves proved untenable, however, as the balance on the Continent began to shift. We realized this during the Boer War, when all Lord Salisbury's efforts were needed to prevent a European coalition from forming against us. The Kaiser's telegram to Kruger also reminded us forcibly of the world ambitions of Germany, as well as of her envy and hatred of ourselves, and her ever-growing fleet caused us to revise our position. We became the Allies of Japan in 1902, and thus,

having freed our Navy of some of its work in the Pacific, we were able to concentrate more forces in home waters. Later we thought even of leaving the Mediterranean for the same purpose, since we had fixed up our differences with France, and the French Navy was the strongest in the inland sea. Thus we were slowly, and, I think, reluctantly, veering away from our position of balancer in Europe to our present position in the Triple Entente; and when we made an agreement with Russia similar to that we had made with France shortly after Fashoda, the new position was finally adopted. Russia acknowledged that our warnings as regards Japan showed our real friendliness to her, whereas Germany had egged her on to defeat, if not disaster, and so she came into the Entente, which already included her ally France. Bismarck's wise policy of friendship with Russia broke down when the present Kaiser failed to renew the "Reinsurance" treaty; and though the object of this new combination was in no sense to isolate Germany in Europe, as Germany protested continually that it was, yet we have to recognize that the effect of it was to harden and embitter Germany's fighting temper—if that were possible—by making her feel, rightly or wrongly, that she was shut in not only east and west by Russia and France, but overseas by England as well. Nevertheless England had no choice in the matter, since the policy of Germany had fundamentally altered since 1888. The undoubted European leadership which had satisfied Bismarck, and which rested on a good understanding with Russia, was ousted by the Kaiser's dreams of world empire: "The trident must be in our fist." So direct a challenge to the naval supremacy which is as essential to our safety as is the German Army on its frontiers to the safety of Germany could not be ignored, and England began to watch the German Navy. Moreover, any attempt

at a European dictatorship, leading, as Napoleon had originally intended, to a world dictatorship, must bring England into opposition, and therefore we pledged France, who under her arrangement with us had concentrated her fleet in the Mediterranean, the protection of our Navy against attacks by the German ships upon French Atlantic ports even before that other question, so vital to our own safety, of the German seizure of Belgium was agitated. We are always against a would-be monopolist, whether he be a Spanish Philip II, a French Louis XIV, a French Napoleon I, or a German William II.

In the 1870 war we were saved from intervention by the fact that both Germany and France avoided Belgium altogether, but the invasion in August 1914 was as serious a menace to us as the Russian penetration of Korea was to Japan. The interest of an island State in the continental coast just opposite it is supreme, and unfortunately both Germany's history and also the professed intentions of her responsible spokesmen were such as to compel us to resist even the mere passage of her troops through the State whose effective neutrality has been one of the most constant points in our foreign policy for centuries. Even if we had had no Entente with the Power she was moving against, and no interest in preventing the establishment of a European monopoly of power, still, for the protection of our own coasts and the maintenance of our own first line of defence, sea power, we should have been obliged to fight the moment Germany crossed the Belgian frontier. Antwerp might just as easily prove "a pistol held at the head of England" in the hand of William II as in that of Napoleon.

Perhaps it is not so clearly realized as it should be why Germany chose this perilous path—a path which was bound to cost her dear and is costing her much dearer than she expected. Since 1870



the French fortresses along the German frontier between Luxemburg and Switzerland have been so strengthened that the breaking of an army through them would be a very lengthy and terrible business. Rather than attempt it, Germany preferred to get round one end if possible. Hence, it may be, the Kaiser's recent visit to Switzerland, which is, of course, partly German in population; hence, certainly, the attack on Belgium in August 1914. Our Berlin Ambassador's report of August 8, 1914, in the Government's Penny Blue Book, page 78, puts the matter quite clearly. England was therefore obliged to follow her traditional line. Rejecting the clumsy attempt of Germany to bribe her first to desert France, then to allow the penetration of Belgium, she necessarily incurred the renewed hatred of Germany for having disturbed German plans and having refused to wait her turn at the chopping-block whereon the Teuton was to dismember all his enemies: 'Dilly, Dilly, come and be killed!' as he says to the Strasburg goose before he takes out her liver for *pâté de foie gras*. It was evidently "time for us to go" once more to the relief of Belgium, as we had done so often before at about the turn of the century.

When I had finished the facts about Germany, France, and Russia, I indulged in a little generalizing—perhaps even moralizing. Now, if I follow the same line where England is concerned, what can I say? Little, unfortunately, about our great belief in thought or love of art, little about our popular appreciation of our own best work, and what little there is to be said had perhaps better come last of all. But there are certain practical and material consequences of sea power which stand out so clearly as to be unavoidable.

In the first place, sea power means freedom from



invasion. We are the only combatant who has been spared the horrors of an oncoming army, we and our Eastern counterpart, the Japanese. Our only hint of an invasion was in the darkening of London. And that was pure gain. For the first time in my life I saw the stars in Fleet Street ; London, as one walked about it at night, was a city of mystery and a strange beauty that made it almost unrecognizable. One could again recapture the beauty of the Thames shot-towers that so appealed to the French impressionist, because they no longer cheered up the home-going workers on the trams with thoughts of tea and whisky. The Processional Avenue along the Mall was for the first time a tribute to Royalty, and not to the more brilliant glories of Virox or whatever it is at the other end. But whether the Londoner preferred all this to the glare of Piccadilly Circus is another matter.

Again, sea power means business as usual. Our food comes to us uninterruptedly over the sea at the rate of £500 a minute, and sells at ordinary rates. We alone among the fighters are pursuing our normal course, and pursuing it so steadily that the war is apt to become to us nothing more than muffled boomings across the water and staring headlines in the papers. But so long as it does not blind us to the realities of the war, this immunity is valuable. Mr. Lloyd George said that our enemies could find the first hundred millions as easily as we—but not the last ; and that because, I suppose, we are enjoying much, probably most, of our normal trade income, whereas the continental combatants are fighting upon accumulations ; resources which their vast armies are drinking up at an unheard-of rate per second. But we must keep ourselves from regarding finance as a substitute for men ; we must avoid the false analogy which leads some people to speak of our bills of exchange as a sort of artillery outranging that of

the other side, and the "sinews of war" as the equivalent of soldiers.

Again, behind the shield of our Navy, we can develop increasing military forces, whereas the continental Powers are compelled to put their whole strength into the field at once. The result is that while at the beginning of the war the British were only a tough knot in a long French line, yet as time goes on the size of the British Army will increase much more rapidly than will that of any other Power, and therefore, as the war proceeds, our influence will increase relatively, and the increase will have taken place without that terrible crippling of industry which occurs when the whole manhood of a country is called from its work and put into the field, and which forces conscript countries to pay for their imports with gold and not exports. We can provide, not only the men but also the sinews of war, in continuous supply at the same time because of our Navy, and we are the only people who can.

Again, sea power means not only the uneventful passage of our whole Expeditionary Force across to France; it means also the bringing up of troops from the ends of the earth—Colonials, Indians, yes, even Cossacks from Archangel, because, whether these particular troops were brought or not, the route was a perfectly possible one so long as our Navy held the seas.

One other indirect result of our expenditure on the Navy is also interesting. These large sums are really in a sense an endowment of research. So important is it for the Navy to let no chance slip that the authorities often bring through their experimental and non-commercial stages a number of inventions like wireless telegraphy, turbines, and hardened steel, which later prove to be of incalculable value in industry and commerce, but which might possibly never

have reached the commercial stage but for the nursing of the Navy. The aeroplane, with all its possibilities of usefulness, has, nevertheless, been perfected for war.

All this—and it is a very great deal—is to the good, but it is not all ; and our mistake—a mistake that is costing us and Europe dear—has been to imagine that we need not think, as it were, behind our Navy. The result is that our Army has always been small ; that its movements, therefore, have usually been of necessity slow and cautious. We fought Napoleon's troops—not Napoleon himself—in Spain. But what are the outstanding features of much of the Peninsular War? A great retreat fought by Sir John Moore to Corunna and a stubborn waiting by Wellington behind the lines of Torres Vedras—the very farthest limit of Portuguese territory—for better times. It becomes clear, then, that sea power cannot finish off any particular work—it is simply pressure. Like the *retiarius* in the gladiatorial contests, its trident cannot deal a death-blow, and another weapon is needed. We have, it is true, such a weapon of fine temper and quality in our standing Army ; but, though terribly sharp, it is not long enough : it is a dirk, and we need a sabre. The knowledge abroad that we had ready the million men whom Lord Kitchener has got together at last would have stopped the very idea of war last July, though even that million would not have been sufficient to keep the Germans out of Belgian soil if they had been determined to enter.

And thus we are brought face to face with the problem which, despite the warnings of Lord Roberts, who died in harness in mid-November, we have been blinking at for all these years—the problem of compulsory military service.

Some people affect to believe that we alone of all the European States are without a system of

national service ; but they are quite wrong. The Militia Ballot Act is still on our Statute Book (in 1808-15 all men between 18 and 45, except eldest sons, were called out under it, in spite of the sea power Trafalgar had given us in 1805) ; and the right of the State to call Englishmen to the colours is as untouched and clear as it was in the days of the Fyrd, the Feudal System, and the Press Gang.

We have, indeed, seen already that there is no such thing as freedom against the State ; all the freedom we enjoy, in spite of Rousseau and the *Contrat Social*, is the residuum which the State need not take for itself. If, then, compulsory military service is not usual in England, the reason is to be found in the fact that for the time being the State does not feel obliged to insist on its rights in this matter.

Nevertheless, there is no harm in realizing what some form of compulsion might mean to us. Probably our military needs would never compel us to stop our whole national and industrial life, as is the result of French or German mobilization ; yet, without shutting down most of the works and factories, a larger number of soldiers might well be forthcoming than is the case at present.

One of the worst defects of our present industrial system is the blind alley—the employment which draws boys fresh from school into boys' work for a few years and then, when they are beginning to reach man's estate and ask for a man's wages, discharges them in favour of boys fresh from school. A youth thus discharged is practically shipwrecked at the beginning of his career. Without a trade, he finds himself, when nearly twenty, seeking, often in vain, for some rough, unskilled work to do. Failing again and again, he drops through the ranks of the un-

employed on to the ever-growing waste-heap of the unemployable.

We do not propose to discuss the wisdom or the ethics of letting employers grow rich by such a criminal waste of the nation's manhood. It would have been regarded as treason in the days of Chatham and the Mercantile System. But accepting it as a sad fact, what better fate can befall a youth at the end of the blind alley—which a purblind State ought never to have allowed him to enter—than to be picked up by an organization which will give him discipline and traditions, renew and continue his education, perhaps teach him a trade, and after a few years send him forth again, fresh, not from school but from that rough-and-ready equivalent of a people's University—the Army? It is, of course, largely from the blind alley that the Army already under our existing voluntary system draws its men. The extension of the Army might, then, still further diminish this particular evil.

But the evil ought to be swept away on its own grounds: to maintain the blind alley as an avenue into the Army is the maddest of logic. If, then, we can imagine a statesmanship sufficiently enlightened and powerful to abolish the blind alley in face of the opposition of all those interests which, like the newspapers and the distributing agencies, flourish on this particular abuse, what would be the position of national service? Stronger than ever. For, in the absence of a stratum of our manhood pressed by want rather than patriotism into the ranks of the Army, and not, therefore, representative of even our average population, our citizens would then have to shoulder their own rifles and no longer play the risky and unworthy part of the mercenary-hiring Carthaginian faced with the martial and patriotic Roman, who, in spite of earlier defeats, ultimately sowed the site of Carthage with salt.

They say that one volunteer is worth I forget how many pressed men, but nobody can say that the present war has indicated lack of fighting qualities in conscripts. Of course, a long-service, professional Army like our own, even though its sources of supply in ordinary times are not the highest, seems to have a finish, a slickness about it, a pride in the perfect command of its weapons, which gives it an advantage over the more wholesale forces of the Continent; and undoubtedly our regimental system, with the intense enthusiasm it generates, is an institution of kindred nature, in which we have a very decided pull over the featureless masses of continental infantry. When the Irish Guards achieved their first battle honours they were evidently annoyed, it is said, at the congratulations of the older regiments with many battles on their standards (names chiefly French and Russian, be it noted, and none of them German). Still more striking, perhaps, was the effect of the success of our first Territorial battalion to reach the firing-line—the London Scottish.

But all this advantage of regimental pride would be retained under another method of recruiting and its advantages still further spread with larger numbers of recruits more representative of English manhood.

One defect of our existing system has struck me particularly of late, but it is one which I touch on with some degree of apprehension, because I may be so easily misunderstood. It is this: the call of the country appeals more instantly to the finer and more imaginative among our young men than it does to that more stockish type which forms the bulk of our recruits in ordinary times, and constitutes the real personnel of the British Army. Now it has occurred to me whether this bringing of fire and enthusiasm in large proportions into our Army is exactly what our drill-sergeants and others require to work up into our traditional battalions; but

whether this be so or not, I am quite sure of this : that many a youth whose training and talents are of the greatest prospective value to the community is taking a place which would be just as well—perhaps even better—filled by some loungeur at the street-corner whose imagination has not yet been fired. A universal system would stop this terribly wasteful skimming-off of the sensitives. They would be found in their right proportion, they would not be exempt ; but the voluntary system in war-time, when enlisting motives are suddenly reversed, practically exempts the very people who would be best in the Army by drawing in through its appeal to the higher motives those who are a very precious sacrifice to the brutality of war—the leaven needed in the peace which follows war to leaven the whole. The War Office has told schoolmasters in charge of Officers' Training Corps that they are to stay in England, training up the officers of the future. " They also serve who only stay and teach " ; and it is significant that Lord Kitchener's brother is a schoolmaster. The German teachers were called up only towards the end of October. Perhaps we might even suggest that some who rush into the ranks might be serving their country more faithfully in their accustomed pursuits, especially if they are in public services whose dislocation in war-time might well be fatal. But this is dangerous ground, and a universal system would keep us off it altogether. At present the position is this : An Englishman has the right to choose ; but if he decides not to enlist he is faced with a certain amount of odium, and this is unfair and unsatisfactory. Under a voluntary system it is not easy to reject those who unwisely volunteer ; but under universal service each man would serve where he was most needed, not where he was most anxious to be, and would, moreover, be relieved from the ambiguity of the present system. Professor Cramb,



whose book on Germany reveals his admiration of our enemy's thoroughness, nevertheless says of England: "Even now, in 1913, when I consider England and this vast and complex fabric of Empire which she has slowly reared, its colonies, its dependencies, the cosmic energy which everywhere seems to animate the mass in its united life and in its separate States and principalities, all comparison with decaying empires appears an irrelevance or a futility. Whatever be England's fate, it will not be the fate of Venice or Byzantium, and as a proof of the validity of this impression or this conclusion I seem to discern everywhere stirrings as of a new life, to hear the tramp of armies fired by a newer chivalry than that of Crécy, and on the horizon to discern the outline of fleets manned by as heroic a resolve as those of Nelson or Rodney."

And how, then, shall we envisage our own national share of the war over and above the actual fighting? By as careful and thorough a study of the facts as we can make, by the thinking out of our ideas relative to a settlement, and by such an understanding of our Allies that no amount of German insinuation can disturb our faith in them. We are linked on the one hand with the master-mind and pioneer of European civilization—how many of us realize, I wonder, the greatness of Rodin's gift of twenty masterpieces to England?—and on the other with the great dreamer and Christian mystic who, in his turn, links Europe with the east. All we can do in such company is humbly to try and understand our brothers-in-arms (no easy business for our island-cramped wits) and to polish our own powers—naturally considerable—into comparative brightness. Opposed to us we have the serried ranks of Germany, which have marched to victory not only on the battlefield of arms but on many a field of science and art, where we, as a people, have played too often only the part



of camp-followers, largely because our prophets were not without honour save in their own native England. Already a change for the better has begun, and unless the war fills us with an immense self-conceit and an indolent self-righteousness, the movement of the English heart and mind to a greater appreciation of its own real achievements in the past, and then of those of other peoples, will have been stimulated by our present crisis. But the effort really to throw off our numbing indifference must be severe. I happen to live in Sheffield, and any one would think that, since the Powers all come to Sheffield for the guns and the armour which are the instruments of their policy, interest in foreign politics would be at their keenest in the steel city. But the fact is far otherwise. By a wise dispensation of Providence, the human eye is furnished with a blind spot in the retina where the sensitiveness is so great that otherwise the whole sight might be endangered. So it is with Sheffield. It is the blind spot in the international eye, and perhaps it is as well that the men at work in its gun-yards do not strike whenever called upon to work on a job for a customer whose politics they disapprove.

Nevertheless we must cultivate knowledge and use it as a basis for our judgments. I have more than once suggested a Professor of Foreign Politics as an adjunct to the technical or business side of the Sheffield University—a sort of weather-cock to show how the wind is blowing abroad and who might be pressed to buy cruisers and guns in view of possibilities in the near future. But I really do feel now that our national ignorance of foreign affairs is a matter too serious to continue any longer, and far too serious to joke about.

If we are to have our say, to express our views, whether they be those of Mr. Churchill as to settlement on racial lines or whether we favour an ex-

tension of democracy in Germany, we must make inquiries, as we say, and get to know. Only then can we make our convictions, probably not glowing, but rather water-cooled, like our own Maxim guns, known to our immediate rulers and so to the world at large. This is our great duty to ourselves and to humanity : to fight to a finish and then to see that the great, mild principles we have applied to the building up of our own Empire receive their full weight in the counsels of Europe when the time comes for a full settlement. No partial patching-up must be thought of : that way lies war upon war in an unending vista.

Professor Marcks said in Berlin on October 26th (what a part these professors have played in the war !): "This war is no misunderstanding, no intrigue : it is an eruption of deadly enmity. It must be. The past and the future are at stake. We had to assert ourselves in the world or cease to exist. The world-nation is manifesting itself. It is we [Germany] who are the hero and object of this war ; we are also its cause : for we have ceased not to be."

This is the spirit which made Krupp give a million and a half to the German relief funds as soon as war broke out in anticipation of distress, not in response to it. Krupp alone thus beat even the million Moscow gave to the Russian Fund. No such figures appear in our Prince of Wales' Fund list. The same spirit stirred the German women to force their jewellery on the German Treasury officials. A similar sacrifice is recorded of English women—to release Richard Cœur de Lion from captivity in the twelfth century ! The number of German volunteers is as great as the whole of our new armies, and that in addition to the conscripts, to each of whom the Crown Prince of Bavaria has given a copy of *Jugend's* "Hate Song" against England.

I will conclude with just one verse of this song :—

Come, let us stand at the judgment place  
An oath to swear to, face to face,  
An oath of bronze no wind can shake,  
An oath for our sons and their sons to take.  
Come, hear the word, repeat the word,  
Throughout the Fatherland make it heard.

And then follows the terrible chorus.

Of a truth, it is right and necessary to learn  
from the enemy. Our sea-given privileges carry  
their responsibilities.

THE END

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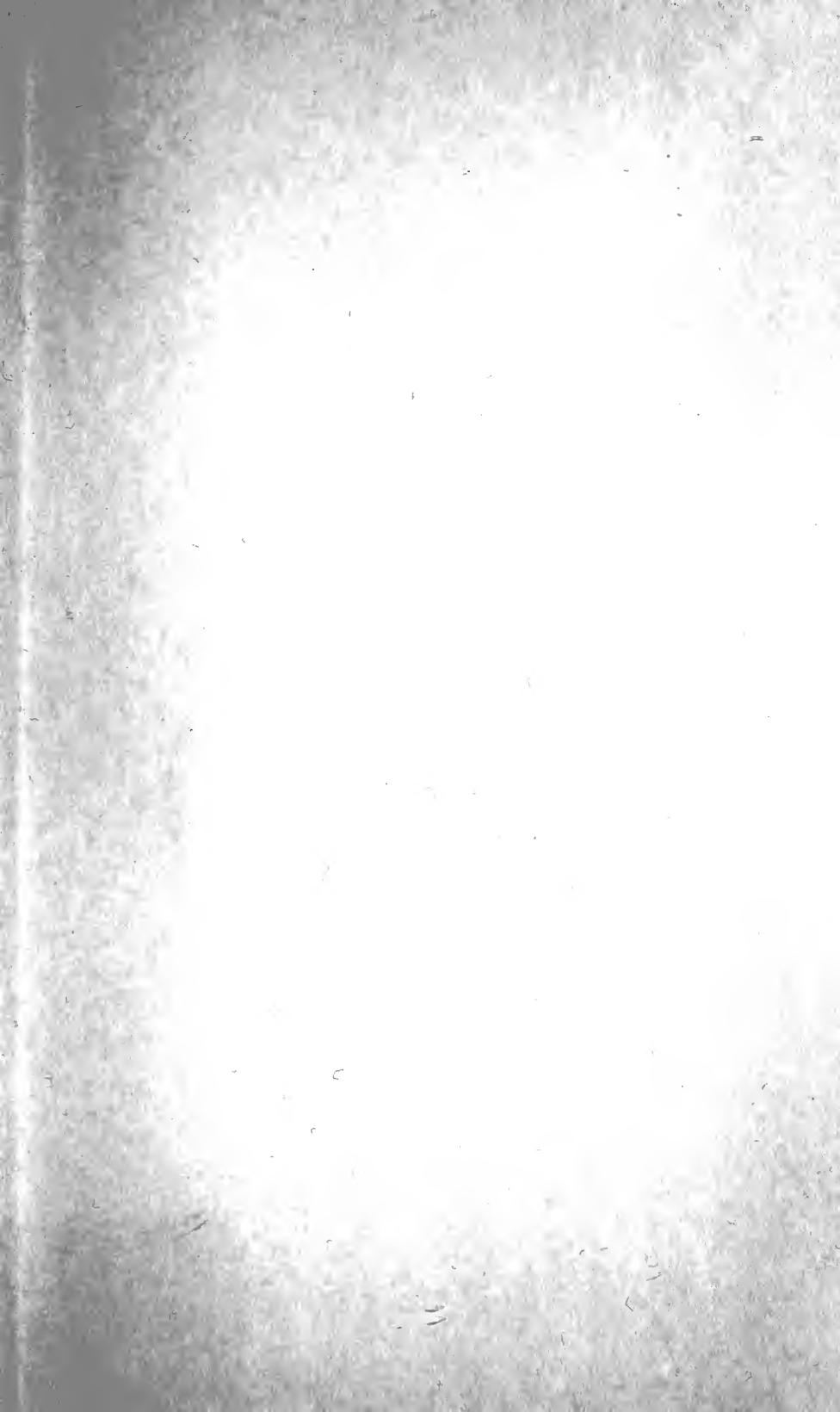
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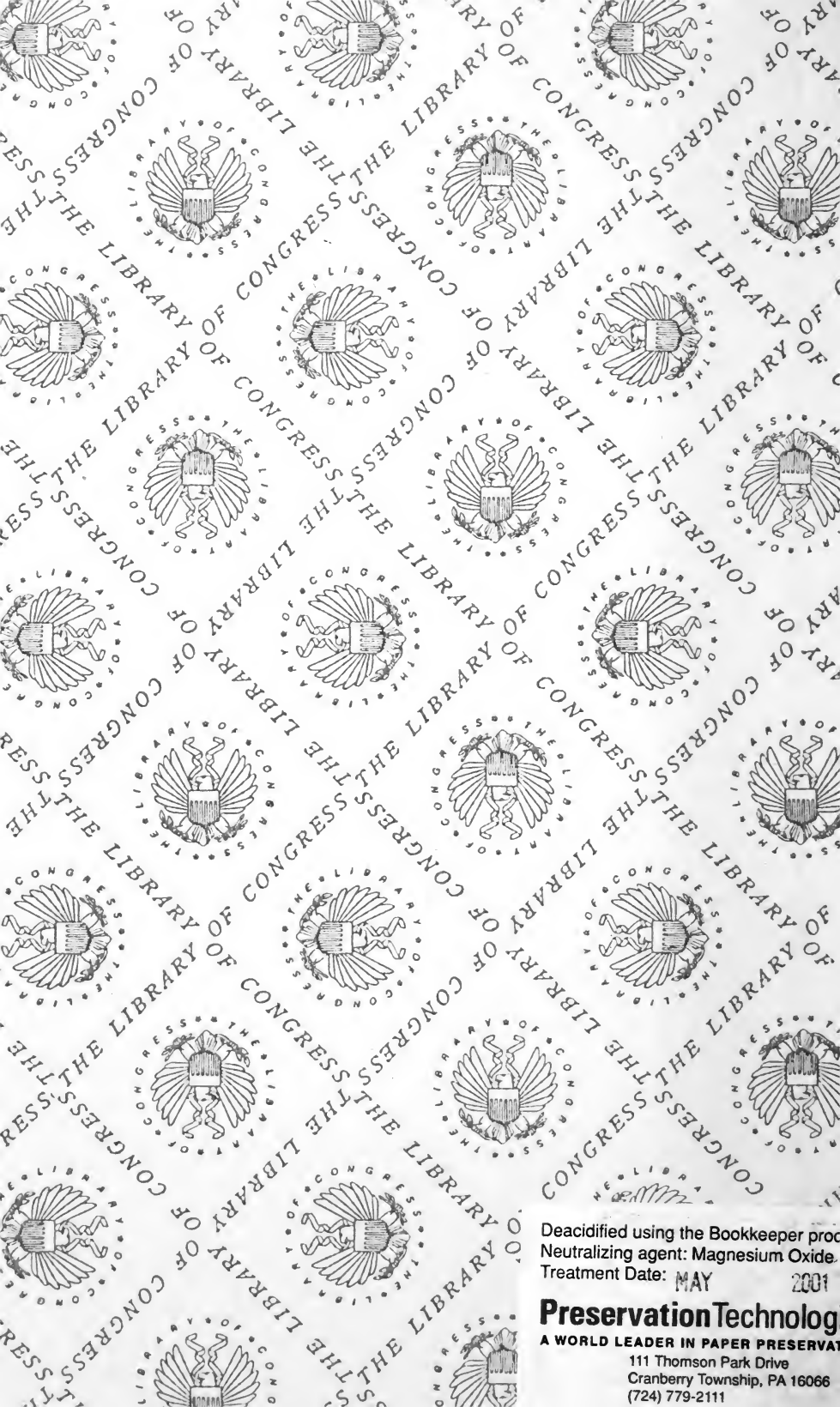
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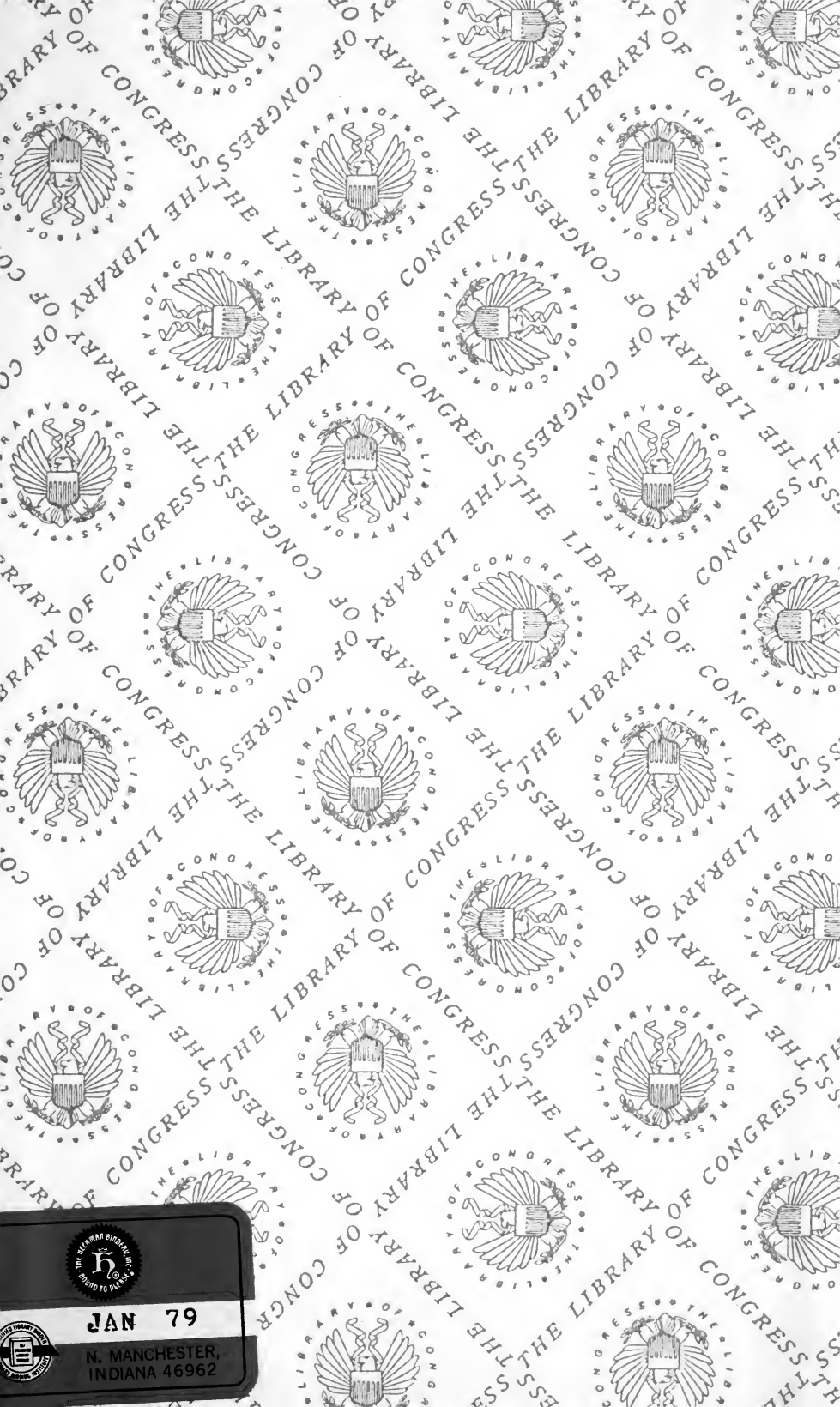


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